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Turkey: Talks needed before Cyprus meeting

NICOSIA (R) — Turkish Foreign Minister Sefa Giris Friday dampened hopes for an international conference on Cyprus next month, saying no partnership could be established unless there was trust between the island's two communities. Mr. Giris told a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to northern Cyprus. "If there is no trust between the communities, it is not possible to establish a partnership," Kostas Atakol, foreign minister of the self-proclaimed Turkish-Cypriot state, said a date for the United Nations-brokered conference, to include Greece, Turkey and the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot communities, could still not be fixed. "We have to reach agreement on the substance with the Greek Cypriots. We have not reached that point yet," Mr. Atakol said. The U.N. conference is being promoted strongly by the United States, which wants to improve relations between the two NATO members on the alliance's south-eastern flank. "Following the completion of the efforts of the U.N. secretary general's representatives, a direct meeting should be organised between the two community leaders with top priority," a declaration said.

5 killed in Iranian protest, group says

AMMAN (J.T.) — At least five people were shot dead and scores injured when Iran's Revolutionary Guards opened fire on a demonstration against the government in the city of Zanjan in northwestern Iran, the main Iranian opposition group, Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, said Friday. Angry residents chanting "death to Khomeini" and "death to Rafsanjani" set government vehicles and buildings ablaze in response to Thursday's shootings, according to a statement telefaxed to the Jordan Times. If true, the incident would be the most serious in recent protests against the government of President Hashemi Rafsanjani. More than 30,000 participated in the protest demonstration in Zanjan, about 250 kilometres from Tehran, the statement said. Revolutionary Guards were dispatched from other cities to quash the unrest, it said. The clashes lasted several hours, and the guards arrested some 2,000 demonstrators, it added.

Minor accident reported at Chernobyl

MOSCOW (AP) — Nuclear safety inspectors are investigating a small leakage of contaminated water during repairs at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the government said in a statement Friday. A leak in a system of exterior cooling pipes allowed low-radioactive water to seep into the building housing the plant's second reactor. Reactor No. 2, said Olga Chernova, spokeswoman for the government nuclear safety oversight committee. The reactor was not operating at the time of the accident, she said. There was no contamination outside the building, no damage and no injuries, she said. Chernobyl was the site of the world's worst nuclear power disaster. An explosion and fire on April 26, 1986, spewed radiation over a wide area of the Ukraine and the neighbouring republics of Russia and Byelorussia. Official accounts say 31 people died in the accident, but others say it killed more than 500.

Ethiopia allows political rights

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopia's new government approved Friday to hold two political meetings and demonstrations, officially ending years of repressive one-party Marxist rule. The government gazette set conditions for legal demonstrations but banned those provoking "ethnic mistrust and hatred" or "discriminating on grounds of race, religion or sex." Members of the former dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam's ruling party, abolished after his government was overthrown in May, were also barred from politics, it said. Political organisers were required to submit details of meetings 48 hours before they were held and some venues such as embassies and hospitals were off-limits, the gazette added. A transitional government established at a conference of 21 political groups in July adopted a charter defending basic human rights and promising multi-party elections in 1993.

Selfish violence

TEL AVIV (AP) — Two masked gunmen Friday shot dead an Irish republican "Army" (IRA) sympathiser as he arrived for work at a factory, raising suspicions of a revenge killing by Protestant paramilitaries. The man who died was the second member of Sinn Féin, the outlawed IRA's political front, and the sixth person shot in a spiral of sectarian murders in the past seven days. Police said the gunman fired after killing the man, a Roman Catholic identified by Sinn Féin as Thomas Eel Gallagher, at the Portna Eel factory near Killybeggs, a largely Protestant area in County Londonderry. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Germany pledges to aid Turkey combat Kurds

ANKARA (R) — The German ambassador Friday promised to aid Turkey fight Kurdish separatist rebels who kidnapped 10 German tourists in the southeast last month. "My government severely condemns PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) terrorism and will assist its contribution to fight it," Eckhoff told a news conference. But he again denied charges by Turkish government officials that the German tourists had faked their own kidnapping. "We have these were not actors but victims in this game," Mr. Eckhoff said. "Conclusions to be drawn from the existing evidence are not founded." He said the Turkish authorities had given him the documents on which they had based their allegations, among them a diary kept by one of the Germans during his detention. Mr. Eckhoff said the diary had been poorly translated into Turkish and the "mission accomplished" was "stated by Turkey's emergency regional governor for the area, Hayri Kozakcioglu, not appear at all. Mr. Kozakcioglu said the tourists had taken photographs of themselves doing dances in places where they had been held, made telephone calls and written coded notes in diaries.

King believes Palestinians will solve problem over representation

His Majesty voices condemnation of Kuwaiti measures against Jordanians and Palestinians, distress over Iraqis' suffering

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has said that he believed that the Palestinians would succeed in forming a delegation to a Middle East peace conference planned to be held in October. The King, in an interview with Reuters Thursday, also said he was planning to visit Syria for talks with President Hafez Al Assad "in the next few days." In the interview, conducted by Reuters' Jane Arif after His Majesty had a telephone conversation with President Assad, the King said: "I have sought to open the way regardless of any personal feelings. It is time and it is needed for our people at least to coordinate and compare notes and work together."

"I have a feeling that the Palestinians must go and the Palestinians will go," he said. "I can't see any leadership in these very difficult times that can procrastinate or hold on to old clichés." Palestinian representation is the main obstacle to the talks, Israel says it will attend provided the PLO and Arabs from East Jerusalem are barred. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) insists that it names its delegates to the talks and that they include a representative from East Jerusalem. Jordan has offered to host a joint delegation with the Palestinians. The King harshly criticised Kuwait's treatment of Jordanians of Palestinian origin, still flooding out of the emirate after losing their jobs and access to government schools. "We used to get rightfully upset at Israel to see Palestinians treated in this way," he said.

He called for international aid to help Jordan cope with over 300,000 of its citizens forced to leave the Gulf because of anger over Jordanian and PLO stands in the Gulf crisis. The King also urged international efforts to help halt human rights abuses against Jordanians in Gulf states. He said he was "shocked, angry and anxious" over the plight of the Jordanians. Kuwait is laying off over 100,000 civil servants, most of them Jordanian passport-holders. The King said he was deeply disturbed at the continued poverty suffering of ordinary Iraqis. An estimated 150,000 Iraqis have come to Jordan since the ceasefire and several thousands are believed to have applied for visas to the West. King Hussein said security forces had now arrested most members of a group, some trained in Afghanistan, linked to



car bomb attacks on officials and private citizens in Amman. "A certain alien group has been discovered in this country. There is a process going on now. It is nearly complete and they will be put on trial," he said. "Their targets were essentially

Jordanian targets and when I say Jordanian I mean everybody who lives here regardless of their origin." The King said some members of the group calling itself the "Prophet Mohammad's Army" had been trained in Afghanistan. Although most of those arrested are Jordanians, he said the group "has had links and connections with the outside." He said reports of hundreds of arrests were exaggerated. At least 70 people are known to have been detained. The government announced last month it had uncovered a group whose members were linked to car bomb attacks on a security official and a priest's daughter. Both lost legs. It said the group, which collected money from citizens under the pretext of helping Palestinians in the occupied territories

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Algerian Islamists demand role for leaders in poll talks

ALGERIA (R) — The Muslim fundamentalist opposition which plunged Algeria into violence in June demanded Friday its arrested leaders be freed and allowed to take part in talks to put a delayed election back on track. The election — Algeria's first multi-party parliamentary vote — was planned in June. Grievances over the rules peaked in a fundamentalist strike and riots which brought down the government. Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) preacher Abdelkader Moghni told some 2,000 militants at Friday prayers the FIS would not join pre-election talks with the government without its leader Abassi Madani and deputy leader Ali Belhadj. The two men face charges of armed conspiracy against the state. The military, enforcing a state of siege imposed on June 5, said last Monday it would pursue the cases despite efforts to disrupt them. Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali is due to meet leaders of Algeria's 52 parties next Thursday. The FIS stayed away from a first round of talks in July. Friday's sermon was its first clear statement of terms for taking part. Mr. Moghni also insisted the state of siege be lifted. "There is no dialogue under the state of siege, as our leaders said before being arrested," he said, preaching in Mr. Belhadj's place at the Sunna Mosque in the poor district of Bab Al Oued, an FIS stronghold. As a third condition, Mr. Moghni said strikers who supported FIS protests over the election rules must be accepted back in their jobs. Officials say 55 people died in unrest which erupted from the FIS strike. Watched by riot police from side streets, Mr. Moghni made a public reference to dwindling number of worshippers attending the fundamentalists' bastion mosques. "We have been hit by a great shock which has plunged the militants into terror and suspicion, each seeing a spy in the other," he said. Mr. Belhadj and Mr. Madani, who preached alternate Fridays in Kouba Mosque on the heights of Algiers, regularly drew more than 10 times the number of worshippers. The government plans to hold the election before the end of the year, possibly in November.

Perez de Cuellar is 'very hopeful' of hostage deal

BEIRUT (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, asked by Lebanese kidnappers to broker a swap of Western hostages for Arabs held by Israel, said Friday he was "very, very hopeful" of a settlement. Imad Moughneyeh, known as the leading kidnapper of Westerners, was reported back in Beirut to oversee reaction to the freeing of an American and a Briton during the past eight days. But the spiritual mentor of Hizbollah, an umbrella group for hostage-takers, introduced a note of caution by saying he feared Washington wanted to block an exchange. The fate of seven Israeli servicemen missing in Lebanon, since the 1982 invasion, has become the key to any deal to end the long misery of Western and Arab captives. Israel wants the release of those alive and proof that the others are dead before freeing about 400 Arabs held in the Jewish state or by an allied militia in South Lebanon. "I have all reasons to believe that something may happen in a

matter of weeks but I cannot give any assurances. But I am very, very hopeful," Mr. Perez de Cuellar told reporters during a short holiday in Switzerland, after talks with Israeli negotiators in Geneva. Asked what complications were hindering a solution, he said: "Nothing. I think we have to go into details (with the parties involved) about the deal we are discussing." Muslim fundamentalist and security sources told Reuters Friday that Mr. Moughneyeh had returned to Beirut from Iran shortly before his Islamic Jihad group freed British hostage John McCarthy eight days ago. In what Israel and Western diplomats saw as a breakthrough to the hostage saga, Mr. McCarthy gave an Islamic Jihad letter to Mr. Perez de Cuellar urging him to mediate an exchange. The fundamentalist sources said Mr. Moughneyeh told his men that Iran wished them to free two hostages and briefed them on contacts to swap their captives for Arabs jailed by Israel. American Edward Tracy was freed last Sunday.

"Imad and his associate are now following up the various reactions to their move," one source said. "They will soon come up with something indicating how they think things are going." Nine Western hostages are held by him and his associates, believed to be members of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah. The hostages are five Americans, two Britons and two Germans. Italian Alberto Molinari was said by a senior security source to have been killed shortly after his abduction in 1985. Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hizbollah's spiritual mentor, told followers Friday: "We think according to the American statements that they do not want to exert pressure on Israel to release the captives it holds. "We know that it is possible for the U.S. to block the mediation of the U.N. secretary-general... "What attracts our attention... is that the U.S. president said he understands the Israeli stand in getting back its soldiers and

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Morocco frees 269 Sahara prisoners

RABAT (R) — Morocco has freed 269 people it arrested on suspicion of having contacts with independence-seeking guerrillas in the Western Sahara, the official news agency MAP said Friday. The agency said they had been held at Kelat M'gouna, a small oasis in eastern Morocco, and other centres after being arrested in military operations. They were held because of "their intelligence with the enemies of the Kingdom's territorial integrity," it added, referring to Polisario Front guerrillas who have been fighting Morocco since 1976 for independence of the former Spanish colony. The United Nations is due to hold a referendum there next January to decide its future. The detainees were released after the intercession of tribal leaders from the area and the Consultative Council for Saharan Affairs, an official body appointed by King Hassan. Foreign human rights groups including London-based Amnesty international have reported the disappearance of hundreds of Western Saharans, who were allegedly held in detention centres. The justice ministry later published a list of 110 political prisoners including two women pardoned by the King to mark the 12th anniversary on Wednesday of Morocco's annexation of the southern part of Western Sahara known as Wadi Eddehab. Morocco annexed Wadi Eddehab after Mauritania abandoned the area ceded to it by Spain under an accord signed in Madrid under which Morocco and Mauritania shared the territory between them. Among the prisoners pardoned is Ali Idrissi Kaatoui, a writer jailed for 15 years after publishing a collection of poems entitled Etincelles (Sparks) judged offensive to King Hassan. The two women were identified as Saadia Qabil and Nezha Bernoussi who were jailed for six years in 1986 for plotting against the state. Mohammad Ganouch was jailed for 20 years and Mohammad Jaidi for 12 years at the same trial were also freed. The list also included four members of the outlawed Itah Amam (Forward), among them Abderrahman Nouda who was jailed for life in 1977. MAP said four Marxist-Leninists would remain in jail, including Abraham Serfaty, 66, the leader of Itah Amam who was jailed for life in 1977 for plotting to set up a people's republic.

U.N. approves monitored Iraqi oil sales worth \$1.6 b

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. Security Council has approved a one-time Iraqi oil sale worth up to \$1.6 billion, and U.N. officials were expected Friday to begin drawing up plans to monitor proceeds from the sale. The resolution, passed overwhelmingly Thursday, states that the U.N. secretary-general has 20 days to present a detailed plan to monitor the oil sales and approve purchases of food and other humanitarian supplies. Iraq will have to control over the oil revenue, which will be managed entirely by the United Nations. Iraq's envoy to the United Nations, Abdul Amir Al Anbari, denounced the plan as a "neocolonialist trusteeship system" but stopped short of saying Baghdad would refuse to pump the oil. Never before has the United Nations managed the trade of a member state and domestic distribution of supplies. Iraq could begin exporting oil from storage facilities and pipelines as soon as the council approves the plan and decides on the details of the sale. The vote in the U.N. was 13-1. Cuba voted no and Yemen abstained. Under a second resolution unanimously adopted, Iraq would

pay up to 30 per cent of its future oil revenues into a compensation fund for victims of Iraq's Aug. 2, invasion of Kuwait. Oil revenues also would pay for the destruction of Iraq's chemical arsenal, inspection of its nuclear programme and demarcation of its border with Kuwait. A third resolution adopted unanimously condemns Iraq's failure to fully disclose its nuclear programme, chemical and ballistic weapons programme and germ warfare research. It demands that Iraq grant immediate access to U.N. weapons inspectors and prohibits it from moving weapons-related equipment sought by inspection teams. It also provides for U.N. aerial surveillance. "The council is holding the Iraqi people as hostage and asking a ransom which is the oil resources of Iraq," Mr. Anbari said. He said the U.N. oil sale "undermines Iraq's sovereignty as a free country. It gives foreign powers the right to control Iraq's natural resources, dispose of its wealth and dictate its trade as they wish." U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering said: "Iraq is being given an opportunity to help its own people, with safeguards,

given that the regime cannot be trusted." Before the Gulf war, Iraq produced about 2.9 million barrels of oil a day, most of it for export. The United States bought about 440,000 barrels a day from Iraq. Non-aligned nations criticised the resolution as being too restrictive and invasive. India said it was concerned the terms of the oil sale could set a precedent for U.N. involvement in countries' domestic affairs. But non-aligned nations did not mount a serious challenge to the resolution which was endorsed by the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union — all permanent council members. China, the fifth permanent member, had serious reservations but did not abstain in the voting as was expected. In addition to the five permanent members, the council includes Austria, Belgium, Cuba, Ecuador, India, Ivory Coast, Romania, Yemen, Zimbabwe and Zaire. Turkey will consider reopening Iraqi oil export pipelines if Iraq asks it to do so. "We are awaiting Iraq's request and then we will assess opening the pipeline," Vebbi Dincerler, state minister with responsibility for oil, told Reuters.

Palestinians to discuss U.S. promises in London

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The three Palestinian leaders who met U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on six Middle East peace missions this year flew to London Friday for talks on U.S. promises ahead of a planned Mideast peace conference. Israel Radio said Faisal Al Hussein, Hanan Ashrawi and Zakariya Al Agha would also consult British Foreign Office officials on the U.S. proposals to convene the Middle East peace conference in October. The Palestinian leaders left for London Friday morning, relatives said. The U.S. assurances seek to encourage the Palestinians to take part in the peace process. The United States, trying to coax Israelis and Palestinians to a Middle East peace conference, has offered to write them both letters of assurances. In an interview published in the Arab East Jerusalem Al Fajr newspaper Wednesday, Dr. Agha said they planned to meet experts on international law from outside the occupied territories, including Palestinians, to discuss the legal aspects of the proposed U.S. guarantees. Mr. Hussein and Ms. Ashrawi met three U.S. officials a week ago in the occupied West Bank town of Ramallah to draft their demands for assurances before going to the peace conference. Palestinian sources said Mr. Hussein and Ms. Ashrawi asked U.S. officials to meet them outside the occupied territories to allow non-resident Palestinian experts to take part. There was no immediate U.S. reply. Israel has given qualified support for a peace conference, insisting that the Palestinian team of negotiators exclude Arabs from East Jerusalem or from outside the occupied territories. Palestinians, although keen on peace talks, say the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) must name their delegation without outside interference.

Bessmertnykh sends message to Levy

Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh, in a message to his Israeli counterpart, expressed hope for a speedy resolution of procedural questions holding up the planned conference, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday. Mr. Bessmertnykh noted he was writing to Foreign Minister David Levy in the framework of an agreement between the two officials to "share thoughts on the situation and the advancement of a peace solution" in the Middle East, the spokesman said. Mr. Bessmertnykh wrote that the Soviet Union "supports the whole process" leading to the peace conference, planned under American and Soviet auspices. Mr. Bessmertnykh promised that the Soviet Union "will do everything in its power to promote direct negotiations (between Israel and the Arabs) for which Israel did so much," said the spokesman. Mr. Bessmertnykh wrote that the Soviet Union "certainly obligates" a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the peace conference, the spokesman said. The issue of Palestinian representation still remains unresolved. The Soviet minister, according to the spokesman, concluded by writing that he was "interested in maintaining constant contacts with Minister Levy in order to check the advancement of the peace process." Mr. Bessmertnykh's message came after Israeli media reports that Moscow planned to renew diplomatic ties with Israel in September. The Soviet Union denied this.

West Bank boy dies from mysterious explosion

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A Palestinian boy died Friday after being wounded a day earlier by a mysterious explosion in the Israeli-occupied West Bank city of Hebron, relatives said. They said Khairi Barakat Al Natsheh, 11, died at an Israeli hospital in Jerusalem from head and stomach injuries. The boy's 36-year-old father and 40-year-old uncle were slightly wounded in the blast at their metalworks shop. Israeli sources said after the incident the cause of the explosion was unknown. Palestinians said the family had nothing of a work-related nature which has explosive in the shop.

Indian Airlines plane crashes; 69 killed

NEW DELHI (AP) — An Indian Airlines Boeing 737 crashed in a hilly jungle in eastern India Friday several kilometres short of its destination, killing all 69 people on board, airline and government officials said. The crash came one day after another plane flying in the region was the target of a hijack threat, an airline official said on condition of anonymity. The threat was made in telephone calls to two airports, but no attempt was made to seize the plane, the official said. The caller claimed to be a member of a separatist organisation operating in Assam state. Airline officials and a government spokesman said there was no evidence that Friday's crash was due to sabotage or a hijack attempt. News agencies said 63 passengers, including an infant who was not on the jetliner's manifest, and six crew members were aboard the plane when it went down outside the city of Imphal. Officials said the company did not have the nationalities of the passengers, but it was unlikely that any foreign nationals were on the flight. R.K. Raubir Singh, chief minister of Manipur state, said all 69 people aboard were killed, Press Trust of India and United News of India reported. Two air force helicopters found the wreckage of the plane near Loktak Lake in the Thangning Hills, a lush green area that climbs northward towards the Himalayas, the agencies said. The crash site was eight kilometres just outside Imphal, the capital of Manipur, a state bordering Burma. No cause for the crash was given, although initial reports said the plane went down in bad weather. It is monsoon season in the area, and heavy rains and high winds are common. An inquiry is mandatory after airline accidents. A meteorologist at the national weather bureau said he had no report of adverse weather. The wind speed was a normal 20 to 30 kilometres per hour, he said. "The clouds are not too dense, but as you know, this is a hilly area," and there could be mountain gusts, he said on condition of anonymity. The city of Imphal, with 150,000 residents, is in a valley ringed by lush green hills 600 kilometres northeast of Calcutta, where the flight originated. Indian Airlines, one of the largest domestic airlines in the world, flies to 62 destinations, including eight in neighbouring countries. It makes at least 240 flights a day. But it has a poor safety record. At least seven of its planes have crashed since 1963 either due to pilot error or poor maintenance.

Iran should gain from hostage release, improve image

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — By helping free Western hostages, Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani hopes to reap economic and political rewards crucial to curbing discontent among his people and stifling radical rivals.

Mr. Rafsanjani, leader of Iran's pragmatists, is painfully aware that unless he can kick Iran's moribund economy into high gear, and quickly, he faces domestic turmoil that will bolster his anti-Western opponents.

To do that, he needs large-scale investment and advanced technology from the West. He has made some advances by building bridges over the last two years to end Iran's isolation, partly by encouraging contracts with U.S. and European companies.

But he is not likely to get the economic support he needs until the pro-Western zealots holding most of the 11 Western hostages in Lebanon unchain their captives.

Recent reports from Iran indicate growing unrest as conditions worsen, with no sign of an economic upswing after more than a decade of war, political upheaval and grotesquely inept economic management.

Travellers from Iran and opposition sources claim that discontent over rising prices, food and housing shortages, and growing unemployment have caused violent protests in Tehran and other cities.

"There's no question that Mr. Rafsanjani has big problems," Middle East analyst Hans-Heino Kopietz said.

Mr. Rafsanjani has acknowledged that the country's debt when the Iran-Iraq war ended in 1988 reached \$10 billion, said Mr. Kopietz, until recently with London's International Institute for Strategic Studies and now a consultant.

A U.N. team reported Tuesday that the damage to Iran's economy in the 1980-88 war totalled \$50 billion.

"Many Iranians, particularly the big bazaar merchants, are fed up with the hostage crisis. They see it is an impediment to economic development. They want it out of the way," Mr. Kopietz said.

Mr. Rafsanjani and his moder-

ate faction are widely believed to be behind pressure, on the Lebanese captors to release some of the hostages on humanitarian grounds and as a goodwill gesture.

His eagerness to free the Western hostages, kidnapped by extremist factions organized and funded by Tehran in the 1980s, does not stem from any sudden moral conversion. Mr. Rafsanjani is as committed to the Islamic revolution as anyone else.

But he has realized that the crusade to export the revolution of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has failed.

If Mr. Rafsanjani can help free the hostages, the response by the United States and other Western powers who have held Iran at arms length for more than a decade could be swift and beneficial.

Diplomatic relations with the United States, severed in 1979, could be resumed within a year, Mr. Kopietz said. The Americans will likely move to resolve the issue of Iran's estimated \$12 billion in assets frozen in the United States since 1979, funds that Tehran badly needs.

The United States will also likely block Iranian oil imports, Tehran's economic lifeline, and restore trade. European nations would move to restore export credit guarantees, analysts believe.

Despite a liberalising trend in social practices and economics under Mr. Rafsanjani, there is still considerable anti-Western hostility in Iran. This is a potent force the radicals could exploit.

The radicals, led by former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, are virulently anti-Western and consider themselves the true heirs of Ayatollah Khomeini, who died in June 1989.

They believe Mr. Rafsanjani's policies betray Ayatollah Khomeini's revolutionary teachings and will open the door once more to the foreign economic domination that existed under the late Shah.

Until recently, Mr. Rafsanjani appeared to have gained the upper hand in the power struggle. But the radicals remain deeply entrenched in the bloated Iranian bureaucracy, and could undermine his efforts.

"The radicals are trying to put Mr. Rafsanjani on the run. They see a chance to exploit his failure to revive the economy and improve conditions," Mr. Kopietz said.

'Israel must be pressed'

A senior Iranian cleric said Friday that if Israel refuses to release Arab detainees in return for Western hostages in Lebanon, it should be pressured into doing so.

Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, former head of the judiciary, said in the weekly sermon at Tehran University that Israel must release the Arabs it was holding. "If it does not listen, it must be pressed," he said in comments broadcast by Tehran Radio, monitored in Nicosia.

He said Westerners pretend as if they have "descended from heaven," and have no regard for detainees if they are not from Western countries.

He also criticised an Arab-Israeli peace conference, saying, "the only solution is the sword."

Iran's foreign minister said Thursday Tehran will continue efforts to free the Western hostages, but warned the captives cannot be freed until Israel was pressed to free Arab prisoners and a Shiite Muslim cleric.

Tehran Radio reported that Ali Akbar Velayati said in a message to his British counterpart, Douglas Hurd: "The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates it will use its influence to free the hostages."

Mr. Velayati warned that Israel had "created obstacles" to the release of the other hostages.

A key demand of the Lebanese kidnappers is that Israel free Lebanese and Palestinians, including Shiite Muslim cleric Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid.

He was kidnapped by Israel agents from his home in South Lebanon in July 1989 as a bargaining chip.

Israel has said it is willing to free Sheikh Obeid, provided seven Israeli servicemen missing in Lebanon, some since 1982, are released or their remains handed over. And it said it will take no step until it has firm details about the fate of the seven.

Iran has said that demand created "hurdles" to a final resolution of the hostage crisis.

Iraqi army officers receive pay hikes

BAGHDAD (AP) — The government announced it has increased salaries and benefits for army officers, at least the third such increase since Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the United Nations began a food distribution programme among Baghdad's poor on Thursday. Hundreds of black-shawled widows and elderly and disabled people flooded a welfare centre to get their share.

The food distribution took place as the U.N. Security Council voted Thursday in New York to allow Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil to buy food and medicine. Thirty per cent of the money will pay war reparations.

Even before the latest pay raises were announced Thursday, army officers were among the highest paid employees in Iraq.

The Defence Ministry's newspaper, Al Qadisiya, said the ruling Revolution Command Council Tuesday had given raises of 100 dinars (\$500 at the official exchange rate) a month to top-ranking officers and 40 dinars (\$120) to their subordinates.

The officers also can obtain housing loans of 15,000 and 8,000 dinars (\$45,000 and 24,000), the newspaper said Thursday.

The raises were "concerned with elevating the standard of living and social position of the armed forces," Al Qadisiya said.

The increases "constitute new bounty from the president to be added to the previous chain of achievements and gifts made to the sons of our brave army."

There have been at least three pay raises since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, plus special bonuses recently of hundreds of dinars a month to about 3,000 officers in an elite group whose membership is obtained by receiving at least three combat medals.

Generals already make at least 1,000 dinars (\$3,000) a month, compared with the average government worker's pay of 160 (\$480). Top generals also get benefits such as cars and cash bonuses.

In impoverished Saddam City, where about half of the capital's estimated four million people live, people lined up to obtain a share of some 50 tonnes of flour furnished by the U.N.'s World Food Programme (WFP). It is being distributed, with WFP supervision, by Iraqi government agencies.

The government began rationing food about 12 months ago because of the U.N.-mandated economic embargo imposed on Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait.

"The ration is not enough," said a woman dressed in a black robe and shawl, who did not give her name. "I have eight kids."

The woman, whose brown face was tattooed with blue cross-stitch patterns in the style of the bedouin, said her husband had fallen ill and died while serving in the army during the Iran-Iraq war.

Saddam City was known as Al Thawra, or revolution, township until the government upgraded services to the area, largely because so many of its men were martyred in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

The trash-strewn streets of Saddam City have provided an ideal recruiting ground for the army, which provides a way out to uneducated, desperate youths.

The army has undergone demobilisation from about one million to possibly 500,000, but those who remain in service are cared for.

Uncertainty about status of Western hostages

(Agencies)

EVEN IF ALL the remaining Western hostages are released by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon, there is little expectation that 11 faces will emerge from Beirut's back alleys. Two of the missing men are believed to be dead.

When British hostage John McCarthy was released last week by Islamic Jihad, he brought with him the first confirmed sighting of British hostage Terry Waite in captivity.

Mr. McCarthy also reported that Americans Terry Anderson, the longest-held Western hostage in Lebanon, and Thomas Sutherland, an educator, were in good shape.

Mr. Waite, the archbishop of Canterbury's 52-year-old envoy, disappeared in January 1987 while seeking the release of hostages. Mr. Anderson, 43, chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, was kidnapped in March 1985. Mr. Sutherland, 60, acting dean of agriculture at American University of Beirut, was abducted in June 1985.

Since January 1984, when the taking of Western hostages began, 88 foreigners have been reported missing in Lebanon. Sixty-eight have been freed or said they escaped.

Authorities are reasonably certain that nine have been killed or have died in captivity. They include two who worked for the U.S. government:

—Lieutenant-Colonel William R. Higgins, a U.S. marine serving with U.N. observers in Lebanon, was shown hanged in a 1989 videotape. He had been kidnapped the previous year.

—William Buckley, 57, a U.S. embassy political officer in Beirut, was kidnapped in 1984 and believed to have died of pneumonia the following year after being subjected to torture.

Published reports said he was the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief in Beirut.

Eleven hostages are still listed as missing or captive, including Mr. Waite, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Sutherland. But two Europeans among the missing may well be dead:

—Alec Collet, a British writer on assignment for a U.N. relief agency, was kidnapped on March 25, 1985. A year later the group that claimed to hold him said it had killed him, and a videotape made public purported to show him hanging from a scaffold. The British government, while never confirming his death, no longer lists him with other hostages.

—Alberto Molinari, a Beirut-based Italian businessman, was kidnapped Sept. 11, 1985. Italian diplomats have said they received information that Mr. Molinari died of a heart attack while resisting abduction. Other reports said he was killed by kidnappers who believed he was a Lebanese. Mr.

Molinari's son, Luigi, said this week there has been no official confirmation of his father's death.

The other hostages are Americans Joseph James Cicippio, 60, Alanna Steen, 52, and Jesse Jonathan Turner, 44, Briton Jack Mann, 77, and Germans Heinrich Strubing, 50, and Thomas Kemper, 29.

Also missing in Lebanon are seven Israeli servicemen who appear to be the linchpin in a prisoner swap being negotiated by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Palestinian guerrilla leader Ahmad Jibril said recently that three of them are alive and four are presumed dead. He did not give a breakdown.

Appeal for U.N. help

About 40 Lebanese, mostly women in veils, staged a sit-in at United Nations offices in Beirut Friday, adding their voices to pleas for an exchange which could free relatives held by Israel or its local allies.

"Perez de Cuellar, help us release our fathers and sons from the prisons of Israel and its collaborators," said one of their banners, appealing to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

"The silence of international legality towards our cause is a stab in the heart of humanity," said another.

"Our sons are not terrorists or killers," said a statement from the families handed to Norwegian Lieutenant-Colonel Thor Eid, representative of the nine-nation U.N. peace-keeping force in South Lebanon.

"We urge the world and the countries involved to deal in an equal and balanced manner with the issue of detainees."

Mr. Eid said the message would be passed to the secretary-general.

A tearful woman in her twenties said her brother Ali, 27, had been held in an Israeli prison since 1985 when he was taken from their home in the south and accused of helping guerrillas.

Asked whether she supported freeing the Western hostages in Lebanon, she said, "A Westerner is a human being, but a Lebanese defending his occupied country is (treated as if he is) not."

She declined to be identified, saying she feared Israeli retaliation.

She said innocent captives should be freed but those held by Israel and its allies were not being given equal priority with Western hostages.

A few mothers said their sons had been kidnapped by the Lebanese Forces (LF) militia and passed on to Israel when the private army disbanded this year.

Aeroflot and El Al sign accord on direct flights

MOSCOW (AP) — The Israeli and Soviet state airlines have agreed to set up a joint venture to fly Jewish immigrants directly to Israel in a move that paves the way for regular commercial flights, an official said Thursday.

Israeli Transport Minister Moshe Katsov and Soviet Minister of Civil Aviation Boris Panyukov Wednesday signed an agreement in Moscow between Aeroflot and El Al, said Yosi Ben Dor, press attache for the Israeli consulate in Moscow.

Currently, El Al flights between Israel and the Soviet Union are chartered by the Israeli government for hard currency. The agreement would convert the charters into a joint venture with the aim of increasing the number of flights.

The only other direct flights are operated by semi-private Soviet businesses that fly from the Latvian capital of Riga or the Georgian capital to Tel Aviv, Mr. Ben Dor said.

Most Jews emigrating from the Soviet Union go by train or plane to a third country, usually Hungary or Romania, before they are flown to Israel.

Mr. Ben Dor said that it is not known when the flights will begin or from which Soviet cities they will originate. He said the details would be ironed out in negotiations later in Israel.

He said that an original agreement for the joint venture was reached between the two airlines in December 1989, but because of "political reasons" the company did not begin working.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq establishes telephone links with U.S.

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, its telephone system smashed in Gulf war bombing raids, said Friday that it had restored telephone links with the United States. The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra said Iraq's satellite earth station at Al Dejal had been repaired and contact had been made with "the international telecommunications centre" in the United States. "The success of these experiments is a first step and will be followed in a few days by steps to reopen international communications," it said, quoting a source at the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Petrol bombs hit Istanbul bank branch

ISTANBUL (R) — Petrol bombs thrown at a bank branch and a municipal building in Istanbul early Friday caused damage but no injuries, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the blasts at private Yapi Kredi Bank's branch office in Laleli district in the old part of Istanbul and a municipal building in Unuturmu on the outskirts of the city. It was not clear whether the bombings were related to Thursday's seventh anniversary of the start of a separatist campaign in the southeast by the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK). Previous similar bombings have been claimed by the outlawed group Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left), which said it was behind the killing of two Americans and a score of bombings against Western targets during the Gulf war.

2,600 more Falashas said due in Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Army radio said Friday that Israel would fly out some 2,600 black Jews left behind in Ethiopia after its emergency airlift of more than 11,000 to the Jewish state in May. The 2,600 Jews who remained in Ethiopia will be brought to Israel as immigrants in the coming months. This was agreed today between the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the Ethiopian authorities, the radio reported. Israeli planes ferried the black Jews (Falashas) to Tel Aviv in a 22-hour-long operation.

Egypt to set up consular office in Seoul

SEOUL (R) — Egypt will open a consulate in Seoul, its first official representation in South Korea and an apparent prelude to full diplomatic ties, the Foreign Ministry said Friday. Consul General Mohammad Amin Chokmany and a staff of four would arrive in Seoul Monday, a spokesman said. Egypt has no diplomatic relations with South Korea and recognises rival North Korea. Seoul opened a consulate in Cairo in 1982.

Lebanon grants amnesty to war criminals

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's cabinet has approved an amnesty for war crimes committed during 15 years of civil strife, setting the stage for rebel General Michel Aoun to leave for asylum in France. Official sources said the decree was issued after heated debate during a three-and-a-half-hour meeting. It must be endorsed by parliament. The government had said it wanted to try Gen. Aoun, who led an 11-month rebellion against President Elias Hrawi, for war crimes. Gen. Aoun took refuge in the French embassy in Beirut after thousands of Lebanese and Syrian troops, backed by Syrian airpower, ended his mutiny last Oct. 13. France is willing to grant him asylum but the government has so far not let him leave.

Panel probes Israeli role in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (AP) — A presidential commission has concluded an eight-month inquiry into allegations that Israel's intelligence agency trained Sri Lanka army officers and Sri Lankan rebels at the same time. No findings were disclosed. Supreme Court Judge Sriimal Wadugodapitaya, the lone member of the commission will submit a report soon to President Ransinghe Premadasa, officials said. The commission also was assigned to probe allegations that Sri Lanka government officials used World Bank funds given for development projects to buy arms from Israel. The allegations were published by a former Mossad officer, Victor Ostrovsky, in his book "By Way of Deception: The Making And Unmaking of a Mossad Officer." Since Jan. 10, the commission heard testimony from 103 witnesses and compiled 5,000 pages of evidence, in addition to 1,000 pages of documents, said Palith Fernando, the senior state counsel. Those who gave evidence included government and opposition members of parliament, senior military and government officials.

Egyptian banks to bail out BCCI affiliate

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian banks, after consultations with the government, will deposit part of their cash holdings to save the Cairo affiliate of the disgraced Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), financial sources said Friday. A Western economist said state-owned had joint-owned banks would deposit 0.5 per cent of their dollar and Egyptian pound holdings at the Bank of Credit and Commerce Misr (BCCM) without interest or below market rates. Al Ahram newspaper Friday quoted an official source as saying the banks had already deposited 0.25 per cent of their holdings, worth about \$60 million, and would place the remainder with BCCM shortly. Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) said last week that bankers were meeting to discuss contributions after BCCM faced a run on its deposits. BCCM's deposits in its parent BCCI were between \$340 and \$440 million, the agency said. President Hosni Mubarak, worried about possible domestic fallout if BCCM crashed, called top banking executives on Sunday to discuss the issue. "The president listened to the views of the heads of the banks and their agreement on support (for BCCM) which represents a real support to the national economy," after the meeting. The central bank last week appointed Egyptian American Bank Chairman Abdul Ghani Gami' to run BCCM. Its supervision. Al Ahram said Friday that United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, a major shareholder in BCCI, was expected to deposit another \$150 million in BCCM shortly. The newspaper said total Egyptian holdings in BCCM were 400 million pounds (\$120 million) and \$500 million foreign currency.

Computer failure helped Bakhtiar suspect

GENEVA (AP) — The hunt for the killers of former Iranian Premier Shapour Bakhtiar was stepped up Friday after a computer failure helped one of the Iranian suspects in the Aug. 6 assassination in Paris escape arrest in Switzerland.

The suspect, Ali Rad Vakili, had spent Monday and Tuesday night at a downtown hotel, carrying a Turkish passport with the name Musa Kocak. His hotel registration card was inserted into the police computer as part of a regular check to see whether names of guests are on the wanted list.

But a computer failure delayed the processing until Wednesday when the suspect had already checked out of the hotel, police spokesman Thierry Magnin said in a telephone interview.

There has been no trace of another suspect, Mohammad Azadi, who had earlier been travelling with Mr. Vakili. The third Iranian, Farouq Boyer Ahmadi, vanished immediately after the stabbing.

Iraq said able to make vast quantities of germ weapons

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iraq was capable of producing vast quantities of biological warfare agents and a limited number of biological weapons at a site inspected by a U.N. team earlier this month, its leader said.

David Kelly told a news conference that no direct evidence of biological weapons was found at the site, Salman Pak, 35 kilometres southeast of Baghdad.

"That does not mean to say that weapons were not manufactured there," the British scientist added.

"The site had been extensively damaged by coalition forces (during the Gulf war), by bomb damage, and in fact the Iraqis had cleared certain key buildings from that site, which hindered our inspection of that site."

During its five-day visit, from Aug. 3 to 7, the 28-member U.N. team discovered Iraqi capability to research, produce, test and store biological warfare agents. Baghdad originally denied having any biological weapons programme.

"When the U.N. team arrived it was told that biological activities for military purposes had begun at Salman Pak in mid-1986 and

halted in 1990. The Iraqis admitted having worked on two agents, anthrax and botulinum toxin.

Mr. Kelly said he could not determine the scope of Iraq's biological warfare activities since only one site had so far been inspected. The Iraqis said their research and development team there consisted of 10 people.

But, he added, "they had a capability to use a 150-litre (40-gallon) fermenter. That is capable of producing vast quantities of biological warfare agents and certainly provided a capability to have a limited number of biological weapons."

Before the U.N. team left, the Iraqis handed over biological materials that could be developed as biological warfare agents, including brucella and tularaemia.

Mr. Kelly said Iraq had signed, and earlier this year ratified, a 1972 convention banning research, development, production or stockpiling of biological weapons.

The U.N. inspection was carried out under a Security Council resolution that established a special commission to find and scrap Iraq's nuclear capability and weapons of mass destruction.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 — Le Chevalier de Labyrinth
18:30 — Documentary
19:00 — News in French
19:15 — Carnet de Notes
19:30 — News in Hebrew
20:00 — News in Arabic
20:30 — Kate and Allie
21:00 — Encounter
21:30 — Classical Music
22:00 — News in English
22:30 — Feature film: "Davy Crockett: King of the Wild Frontier"

PRAYER TIMES

06:32 — Fajr
07:50 — Sunrise
12:50 — Dhuhr
15:10 — Asr
18:24 — Maghreb
20:47 — Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 017040
Anglican Church of God Church, Tel. 62705
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 67440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 62366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 812295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Normal summer weather will prevail and winds will be northeasterly moderate to fresh. In Asaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 21/31
Asaba 26/39

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohamed Manna 7414444
Dr. Anwar Musa 771020
Dr. Fakhr Bihadi 663412
Dr. Salim Al Daboubi 776751
Fire pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Neiroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salim pharmacy 636750
Yacoub pharmacy 649495
Shamsani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Maseh Abu Baker (—)
Al Shams pharmacy (778225)

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EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 199
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 892390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information 121
(directory assistance) 010230
Overseas Calls 623101
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 661101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

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Senate approves laws on RJ, investment company

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament Thursday approved the joint financial legal committee's decision on the revised Royal Jordanian Law no. 11 for the year 1980, as it was referred to it by the Lower House, except for article two which the Upper House rejected saying it should remain as it was in the provisional law.

Article two provides that the RJ, in pursuit of the means that enable it to achieve its objectives, has the right to borrow funds, in accordance with proper procedures, and to issue loan bonds in the terms and at the interest rates provided by a special regulation.

Commenting on this item, Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Ali Suhaimat said that the government was serious in converting the RJ into a private sector company. He stressed that the government does not intend to approve any new loans for the RJ.

In another development, the House, which met under the

chairmanship of its speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, approved the Jordanian Investment Corporation's Law, as it was referred to it by the Lower House, after lengthy discussions in which Prime Minister Taher Masi took part.

Mr. Masi noted that the corporation worked in accordance with the government's general investment policy to encourage investments in Jordan.

The law provided for the formation of a corporation board of directors, to be headed by the finance minister.

The board will group the minister of trade and industry, as its vice-chairperson, the planning minister, the governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, the director general of the General Budget Department, and the director general of the corporation.

The law cancels and supersedes the Pension Fund's Law No. 6 for the year 1976, and provides for transferring all the fund's assets and property, be it movable or immovable, to the corporation.



Secretary General Ahmad Helayel holds a press conference Thursday with imams asking for public assistance for expatriates (Petra photo)

Jordan loses JD 8m in education sector due to Gulf crisis

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has sustained more than JD 8 million losses in the education and higher education sector, as a result of the Gulf crisis, according to a report issued recently.

The report, whose findings were published by Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily, said that the loss resulted from the enrolment of some 56,382 students in the primary and secondary cycles of education requiring building a great number of additional schools.

The report said that 42,661 students had enrolled in the primary education and 14,221 joined the secondary education.

To be able to accommodate this huge number of students, there was need to construct 172 school buildings for primary schools and 47 for secondary education.

However, as a quick measure, the Ministry of Education increased the number of students in each class or section, maintained some of the rented schools, which it was planning to hand over to their owners, and maintained the double shift school system in some schools.

The report estimated that there was need for the recruitment of 2,187 teachers to cope with the number of students enrolled in the schools.

The report estimated the average salaries to be paid to the new teachers at JD 3,437,964 per annum, calculated at a monthly salary of JD 131 for a university degree holder.

The cost of books for students attending primary education would be estimated at JD 661,245, while for students attending secondary schools, the cost was estimated at JD 279,442.

This means that the total cost of all school books is JD 940,687.

The report estimated that the cost of providing services, including water, electricity, fuel and telephone, will be about JD 125,904.

UNRWA might issue appeal for help in dealing with returning expatriates

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The United Nations agency carrying out a 41-year-old mandate to extend assistance to Palestinian refugees is assessing the impact of the return to Jordan of hundreds of thousands of expatriates, most of them Palestinian refugees, and might issue an appeal for international funds.

In the interim, the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) is offering its health and education facilities and emergency relief programmes to "everyday, regardless of registration or non-registration as refugee" with the agency, according to Frank De Jonge, director of UNRWA Affairs in Jordan.

Mr. De Jonge could not provide a specific number, but many of the returning expatriates are believed to be technically eligible for UNRWA assistance since they have been registered as refugees with the agency since the early 1950s.

However, UNRWA schools and health clinics have not been called upon to meet any massive demands from the returnees. Mr. De Jonge said in an interview Thursday.

Standing orders issued by the headquarters of UNRWA in Vienna are "to help these people in whatever way we can, within our limitations," Mr. De Jonge said. Registration as refugees with UNRWA is not a qualifying factor for such help, he added.

"For all practical purposes our facilities and services are available to all needy Palestinians regardless of registration," he said.

There are no plans to reopen registration centres for new refugees, he said. There has been no new registration of refugees since the early 50s, when UNRWA registered around 750,000 people.

"Any person whose normal residence was Palestine for a period of two years immediately before the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and who, as a result of the war, lost both his or her home and means of livelihood" qualifies for UNRWA registration and assistance if he or she was in need of such help.

Descendants were automatically added to the register since then and the number has swelled to over 2.4 million.

At the same time, Mr. De Jonge emphasised that the UNRWA registration has nothing to do with the politics of the Palestinian problem.

"UNRWA registration was only for the purpose of assistance and assistance alone," he stressed in answer to a question of how the UNRWA might take it if its nomenclature was set as the parameter for the "right of return" of the Palestinian people under United Nations Resolution 191.

Demands at schools

According to Mr. De Jonge, who has been working with the UNRWA for the past 15 years, the organisation's schools in Jordan absorbed over 3,000 additional students since August 1990, when expatriates started returning home from Kuwait following the Iraqi invasion of the emirate.

Kuwait's refusal to admit Jordanian and Palestinian children in the emirate's schools is believed to be one of the main factors behind the latest wave of returnees, which began earlier this month.

Many of the returnees, who arrived aboard chartered flights from Kuwait, have told reporters that they wanted to enrol their children in Jordanian schools before September, when the school year begins.

"We have taken around 3,300 new students this year, and we have managed to expand school facilities to accommodate the additions with help from the Canadian and Austrian governments," Mr. De Jonge told the Jordan Times.

"This is the situation as it stands today" as far as the UNRWA's education facilities are concerned in the context of demands from returning expatriates, he said.

Hypothetically, "we could be deluged with applications when the schools reopen next week; we don't really know," he added.

Mr. De Jonge as well as other officials theorised that many Kuwaiti children were being sent to Jordanian government schools because of two reasons. First, most of the returning expatriates are Jordanian citizens and are, therefore, entitled to Jordanian government education for their children. Secondly most of the UNRWA's schools are located within refugee camps, away from areas where the returnees have set up homes.

Health Facilities

In the field of the UNRWA health services, "we have not found people lining up in

thousands at our health centres," said Mr. De Jonge.

Indeed, he added, the UNRWA registered an increase of 50 per cent in demand for its health services in the past year.

But, he said, it cannot be attributed solely to returning expatriates since general economic hardships have forced many refugees in Jordan to revert from private doctors to the UNRWA's clinics.

During the past year, over 40,000 children returning from Kuwait have enrolled at Jordanian government schools. Corresponding figures for private schools were not immediately available but officials estimate that 70,000 school-age children were among the returnees.

"So far we have handled the situation well and we have not issued any appeal for additional funds," Mr. De Jonge said. The UNRWA is studying the situation and "if the need arises, the commissioner-general (of the Vienna-based agency) will issue such an appeal," he said.

Emergency relief programmes — mostly food supplies — are available to "special hardship cases," he said. This applies to "any (Palestinian) family that does not have a potential breadwinner," he said, thus excluding unemployment as a qualifying factor.

These parameters are applied uniformly in the UNRWA areas of operations — Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip — and will also govern, at least in practical terms within budget limitations, Palestinian returnees from Kuwait, Mr. De Jonge said.

Imams urge worshippers to help returning expatriates

AMMAN (J.T.) — Mosque preachers at Friday's prayers in Jordan dwelt in their sermons on the plight of the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates arriving in Jordan from Kuwait, urging worshippers to lend a helping hand to the returnees in every possible manner.

Their sermons were in implementation of a pledge they gave His Majesty King Hussein in a cable on Thursday promising to respond favourably to his appeal to the Jordanian citizens to give assistance to the returnees.

We pledge to set a good example and to lead the process of helping the returnees by word and deed and through the sermons to the worshippers, said the preachers in their cable to the king.

They pledged to place all their capabilities and their services at the disposal of the country at this time of need and to urge worshippers to offer assistance to the returnees in any possible manner and to alleviate their sufferings in line with the teachings of Islam.

The preachers had a meeting Thursday with Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Secretary General Ahmad Helayel who asked them to concentrate their preaching on offering assistance to the returnees and the displaced people from Kuwait and Iraq.

"You have a serious responsibility in guiding the public towards doing good to others and towards enhancing the sense of brotherhood and cooperation," Dr. Helayel said.

He said later that the Ministry of Awqaf's staff have contributed the wage of one day work to the returnees from Kuwait and Iraq.

In line with the government's directives to extend help to the returnees, a special committee set up Thursday, has held its first meeting under the chairmanship of Salameh Hammad, Ministry of Interior secretary general.

Mr. Hammad and his committee have been charged with providing all types of assistance to the returnees and to channel aid from various local and international organisations for them.

The prime minister, who ordered the formation of the committee, has asked various government departments to cooperate with the committee to enable it to carry out its mission.

Representatives of the ministries of social development, justice as well as the Department of Statistics and the Public Security Department and the Jordan National Red Crescent Society in Jordan are on the committee.

Mr. Hammad also met with Resident representative of the United Nations Ali Attia to brief him on the situation. He gave Dr. Attia a memorandum addressed to the U.N. Secretary General asking him to urge world organisations to extend help to the Kingdom to cope with the crisis.

Mr. Hammad also urged various organisations operating in Jordan to offer any help they can. According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, he was promised assistance from these organisations.

The eviction of the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates from Kuwait has drawn reaction from heads of professional organisations in Jordan who said that the

expulsion of expatriates was in contradiction with all Arab and international principles and in violation of human rights.

President of the Bar Association Walid Abdul Hadi said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that by evicting the expatriates "in this most shameful manner," the rulers of Kuwait have proved to be inhuman because the expelled people have no means of living and no homes to go to.

Mr. Abdul Hadi appealed to Arab heads of state and to Amnesty International to interfere and put a halt to this atrocious act and inhuman practice.

Lawyer Jalal Abbas, who is president of the Jordanian Jurists Association, said it was time for the Arab masses and their organisations to take action and to put an end to such excesses on the part of the Kuwaiti regime. He appealed to the Jordanian public to open their homes, their offices and their institutions to give refuge to the returnees.

The president of the Jordanian Medical Association Dr. Ishaq Maraga, also urged the Jordanian citizens to give urgent help to the returnees and deportees. Khalil Khorma, chairman of the Central Council of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions, described the Kuwaiti practice as contradicting all norms and violating all principles.

President of the Jordan Engineers Association Ismail Brewish condemned Kuwait's action as barbaric. He said that the expelled Jordanians and Palestinians were behind Kuwait's construction and prosperity over the past four decades.

Experts call for changing current income tax law to help the poor

AMMAN — Jawad Al Anani, a prominent Jordanian economist, Friday stressed the need for reconsidering the income tax law as a means for ensuring the fair distribution of wealth.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Anani said that a preliminary reading of the income tax law reveals that the government pays 30 per cent of the tax through its investments in companies, such as the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Cement Factories and the Jordan Phosphates Mines Company.

He said that the tax is collected from the companies rather than from the partner individuals.

Dr. Anani said that there was a close relationship between the increase in production and the fair distribution of income.

He said that the failure of the

income tax collection system leads to the imposition of new taxes on the low income people. In this regard, Dr. Anani suggested the imposition of a consumption tax instead of customs duties.

He also called for redistributing investments and finding soft loans and easy funding for new investments. He pointed out that the inflation problem has its negative reflections on the low income groups, who cannot increase their wages or salaries, while the merchants and others whose income is on the rise can raise the prices and attain a better income.

Therefore, he said, what the poor pays eventually goes to the rich, who are not affected by inflation. He said that the solution to the inflation problems lie

in reducing prices and increasing production.

The poor distribution of national income was also a subject of criticism by Mohammad Saqr, head of the Economy Department at the University of Jordan. Dr. Saqr pointed out that the poor distribution of national income has led to passive consequences on the economic sectors.

Dr. Saqr said that the remittances of Jordanians working abroad have contributed to maintaining an acceptable living standard. However, he said, the drop in these remittances during and after the Gulf crisis has clearly demonstrated the imbalance of distribution and disclosed the hidden pockets of poverty.

Leaders of Christian sects urge fellow Iraqis not to abandon war-torn country

By Nur Satt
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Leaders of Christian sects in Iraq issued an appeal July 18 to the board of the heads of Iraqi Christians to remain in their country. Despite this plea, however, at least 1,000 Christian Iraqis leave for Jordan every day.

"We appeal to the children of our Christian people with this fatherly appeal to remind them that they must remain (in Iraq), that they are the effective sector that contributed, and should continue to do so, in the building of our dear Iraq," the appeal said.

"We share our sons' feelings and we ask them to renew their self-confidence in their future and that they must face the immediate changes with faith, hope and confidence and not to choose immigration as an easy outlet," the appeal continued.

But for many Iraqis who are now in Jordan, the immediate present takes precedence.

"We are hungry," said a middle-aged man who preferred anonymity. "My two children need nourishment. Iraq is so expensive now. A tin of milk used to be 200 piasters, now it is about 16 Iraqi dinars."

Most of the Iraqis here have come for similar reasons.

"I have so much to tell you but I cannot think now. I am empty. I feel tired. I just want a normal life, if only for a while," another man said.

According to Father Musa Adeili, director of Caritas, an organisation that helps Iraqis, 2,310 families have been provided with bus tickets to Jordan since June. Caritas also offers financial and

medical assistance. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Iraqis meet at the organisation headquarters for medical examinations, money and food.

Hundreds of Iraqi Christians queue up from 8 o'clock every morning at the Caritas office for medical prescriptions, consultations and tickets for their trip back to Iraq. Around five people on Friday accepted tickets for Iraq. Others entered the office to buy milk for their children.

"We do not only help the Christians. We do not discriminate. There are Muslims who require our help and we help them," said Father Adeili.

Most Iraqis are finding accommodation with relatives or friends around Jordan. But there are some. Father Adeili said, who live in schools, churches, on roofs, balconies, and even in hotels "where they rotate: six people every six hours so they can afford to pay for the room."

There are about 10 families in a school, one family in a dispensary in Fubais and another three families in another dispensary, he said.

Some Iraqis complained about the increasing rents in the Kingdom.

"People here tend to think that we have a lot of money," a mother said. "I came to Jordan before and rent for a furnished apartment was JD 50. Now they are asking for JD 200."

"We left everything in Iraq," another man said. "We are only here to have something to eat. If we had money we would not be standing here in the heat every day."

Some Iraqis are travelling to Jordan to take advantage of the lower prices, Father Adeili said.

"Some come for a month, get the necessary food for their children and medicine and then they go back. When they run out of milk in Iraq, they come back again," he said.

"We may solve their problems here in Jordan," he continued, "but in Iraq, we sent things, but it is never enough."

Still, Father Adeili agrees with the appeal that Iraqis should not leave their country. Everyday he gives a speech to Iraqis trying to convince them to go back to Iraq.

"At the beginning, it was difficult because they were terrified by the situation and the famine. But now they accept it, especially since school begins soon," Father Adeili told the Jordan Times.

But Nadia, 19, does not want to go back.

"I have two brothers in the United States and another in Canada. I want to stay in Jordan until I get a visa to Canada."

According to Nadia, after the war, it has become even more difficult.

"There is too much fighting between people going on. It is an awful life. I want to see the world outside," she said.

Although many Iraqis would prefer not to return to Iraq, they are not seeking political asylum in Jordan. Most are applying for visas to the United States, Canada or Europe.

"We ask the United Nations to help us leave. We ask any embassy to get us a visa, but to no avail," a father of two children said. "I have \$50 that should last me for four months. What can I do? he asked."



Ali Abu Nowar to be buried today

AMMAN (J.T.) — Ali Abu Nowar, a former commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces and member of the Senate, has died at the age of 68. He passed away on Thursday at a London hospital where he was battling cancer.

The late Mr. Abu Nowar had served in several prominent positions and participated in numerous political activities in Jordan. While serving as commander of the Armed Forces in the late 1950s, he was accused of involvement in an attempted coup and fled Jordan to Egypt and lived there as a political refugee for a number of years.

Later, he was appointed ambassador at the Foreign Ministry and also served as His Majesty King Hussein's personal representative and sometimes worked as director of the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company.

The body of the late Mr. Abu Nowar was due to arrive in Amman from London Friday evening for burial in his hometown of Salt this afternoon.

IRAQI JORDANIAN LAND TRANSPORT CO.

Tender No. (6/91)
Sale Of Used Truck - Tractors

The Iraqi Jordanian Land Transport Company intends to sell (236) used truck tractors of type Styer manufactured, in 1981/1982.

RELATED INFORMATION:

1. Custom duties of those truck - tractors are unpaid.
2. Offers can be submitted to buy one truck - tractor; or a number of truck-tractors or all quantity.
3. Truck - tractors can be checked and inspected at the company's garages in Aqaba, Jordan starting from August 15, 1991.
4. Copies of terms conditions and technical specifications can be bought for the sum of (100) Jordanian dinars (JD) from the company's main offices in Amman, between 4th and 5th Circles, Jabal Amman, during official working hours (0900-1400), starting from (15-8-1991).
5. Closing date for submitting offers is (15-9-1991). (1200 hrs).
6. Address:
P.O.Box 5134, Amman-Jordan
Phone No.: 677680, 672502, 672509
TLX No.: 22237
FAX No.: 602870
Dr. Shaker Mahadeen
Director General

New University of Jordan president appointed

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Council of Higher Education has appointed Fawzi Gharabeh as president of the University of Jordan to succeed Mahmood Al Amara in the post.

According to a report in Al 'Ain daily, Dr. Samra has resigned his post. The newspaper gives no reasons.

Dr. Gharabeh had served as dean of the Faculty of Economics and later as university vice-president for administrative affairs.

Jordan Times

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A cruel joke

THE "permission" given by the United Nations Security Council for "monitored" sales of Iraqi oil worth \$1.6 billion cannot but be an open violation of the sovereignty of Iraq, a precedent-setting move for the world powers to interfere in a nation's affairs and, above all, a cruel joke against the suffering people of Iraq.

When the American-led coalition fought Iraq out of Kuwait, all hopes were that it was the end of the crusade against Iraq, and international laws and norms will be allowed to take its course to handle the rest of the affair such as war reparations and invasion damages etc. But no, the world powers had to take it up further along unprecedented lines and assume a supervisory role all along and see to it that the Iraqi people are subjected to more and more suffering as if the international community — if indeed that is what the Security Council claims it represents — has a grudge against the women and children of Iraq.

To rule that a country can sell its natural resources but its government cannot be in charge of the proceeds is nothing but robbing the country of its sovereignty. Many Third World countries whose leaders are not in the good books of the world powers may please take note that a precedent has been set that the U.N. can meddle with their internal affairs under the cover of international legitimacy and violate one of the cardinal principles on which the world body was founded — respect for the sovereignty of individual countries.

Surely, the intelligence and brilliance of the world powers which fought Iraq can also produce alternative means to apply pressure on the Iraqi government without having to starve 18 million people?

We in Jordan do not have to undertake any fact-finding mission to reach the conclusion that the Iraqi people are suffering. Living proof of that is already in Amman, where thousands of Iraqis are stranded foodless and homeless. We are living with it. But for purposes of official record, repeated U.N. missions to Iraq, including those headed by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, and dozens of independent agencies have brought back one unmistakable message: Iraqis face starvation unless immediate action is taken to ensure that they get enough food. The finding of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) was that large-scale famine is in the making in Iraq.

It beats us to envisage how the United Nations has opted to overlook the very fact that it is going to be awfully difficult for the world body to collect revenues from Iraqi oil sales and supply food and medicine to the people of Iraq while ensuring that the actual needs of the people are met and that the Iraqi government does not benefit at all. That is of course assuming that the world body does not have a grocer's mind and will not entertain the idea of opening up a supermarket. But come to think of it, the shape of things coming out of the U.N. does resemble a Shylock owning not only a high-priced supermarket but also a misprogrammed cash register.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein has drawn the attention of the whole world to the plight of the Jordanian-Palestinian community facing repression in Kuwait and eviction from a land where they had spent their whole life, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. In his meeting with heads of diplomatic missions in Amman Wednesday, the King said that the world community should extend a helping hand to the destitute people and help Jordan cope with the new wave of immigration, the paper added. It said that the eviction of Palestinians coincides with the current drive to establish peace in the Middle East and is seen as a form of pressure on Jordan to accept new terms and conditions considered humiliating to the Arab Nation. Jordan, the paper noted, has repeated that it would not give up any Arab right. It said that it could by no means substitute another party in the peace process and that it would continue to adhere to its principled stands. The paper also noted that the current wave of immigration would not force Jordan to abandon its steadfastness and could not weaken its confidence in the Arab Nation. It is a shameful act on the part of those Arabs taking part in the process of exercising pressure on Jordan, by exploiting the human element, and these Arabs should realise that they cannot achieve their evil designs, the paper added. The paper said that the Kingdom, which witnessed other waves of immigration and other forms of pressure in the past, can and will remain steadfast while giving refuge to the Arab people under all circumstances.

Sawt Al Shaab daily wondered why the world community was silent about the plight of the Jordanian-Palestinian community in Kuwait. The current campaign by the Kuwaiti authorities against the Jordanian-Palestinian community whose members are being evicted from the country and losing their property, their savings and their compensations after years of hard work is in many aspects similar to the ongoing Israeli campaign to drive out the Palestinians from their homeland, the paper stressed. The paper said that Jordan has opened its arms to hundreds of thousands of expatriates and returnees and is shouldering additional burdens, despite its meagre resources, and therefore this country is in need of assistance from the Arab and Islamic nations and from various international organisations. The paper said that Jordan also awaits a meaningful action on the part of the world community to put an end to the Kuwaiti acts of repression against the innocent women and children who are being driven out from their homes. Nations which sent their troops to northern Iraq under the pretext of protecting the human rights of the Kurds, said the paper, should now interfere and find a means to protect the human rights of the Jordanian-Palestinian community.

Arafat can still make the world take notice with one word: No



Yasser Arafat

By Judith Miller

THERE he was again. After what had seemed a long absence, Yasser Arafat's familiar three-day-old stubble and his black-and-white checked head scarf suddenly reappeared last week on the front pages of the world's newspapers and at diplomatic centre stage.

His remarks stunned and frustrated some fellow Palestinians, Arab leaders, and American officials, all of whom had struggled for months to secure the agreement of Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to convene a Middle East peace conference aimed at resolving the seemingly unresolvable Arab-Israeli conflict.

Palestinians, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) declared, would not attend an American-brokered peace conference this October unless Washington asked him to choose the Palestinian delegates and guaranteed that Israel would trade land for peace. Both demands were clearly unrealistic; the first was known to be unacceptable to both the United States and Israel, and the second would be anathema to Israel's Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir, who has said that he is willing to talk but that he is not willing to trade land for peace.

Mr. Arafat's message seemed clear enough: If he and the PLO were excluded from the planning of the peace process, no Palestinian would attend the meeting. And in that message was an implicit assumption and a warning: Unless the PLO was included, no Arab state should attend a conference aimed at securing land and justice for Palestinians that would be boycotted by the Palestinians themselves.

In threatening to wreck the talks, Mr. Arafat was attempting to demonstrate yet again what Czechoslovakia's President, Václav Havel, has called "the power of the powerless" — the ability to say no, the power to deny.

In effect, what Arafat was saying is, "I'm important; pay

attention to me," said William B. Quandt, a former Carter administration official who helped shape the Camp David peace accords between Israel and Egypt. And Richard W. Murphy, a former Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs in both the Reagan and Bush administrations, agreed. "As discredited as he is in America and among many Arabs, he still has his base among the Palestinians," Mr. Murphy said. "We and the Israelis are fading ourselves if we pretend that he doesn't."

It is easy to see why some Arabs or American policy makers assumed that Mr. Arafat and his organisation could be bypassed. His egregious miscalculation in supporting President Saddam Hussein in the Gulf conflict — only the latest in a series of political errors that surely would have ended the career of a less durable leader — has left his international personal standing, which is inexorably entwined with that of the PLO, at its lowest ebb.

Financially cut off by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, shunned by Egypt and other Arab members of the anti-Iraq coalition, he is also detested by many Palestinians who lost lucrative jobs in Kuwait because of his decision to support Baghdad when it invaded Kuwait. In addition, his leadership is being chal-



Israeli troops patrolling in occupied East Jerusalem

lenged in the occupied territories by factions that take a far harder line.

So his remarks seem intended first to shore up his personal position by underscoring what those Palestinians meeting in Israel with Secretary of State James A. Baker have been saying all along: that they have been doing so within the PLO's blessing and would not do so without it.

"Paradoxically," said Rita E. Hauser, an international lawyer and expert on the PLO who heads the International Centre for Peace in the Middle East, "Yitzhak Shamir has enabled Arafat to reenter the game by not agreeing to meet with the Palestinians whom Baker has been talking. Shamir's insistence on 'no PLO people' has once again raised the issue of whether there will be a Palestinian delegation at the conference and therefore has enabled Arafat to play a role."

Second, Mr. Arafat's posture of reluctance to permit Palestinians to take part in the talks appears designed to strengthen his credibility among Palestinians, many of whom are deeply sceptical of the Bush administra-

tion's approach. "There is no doubt that Arafat wants a conference," said Hisham Sharabi, a Palestinian professor at Georgetown University and editor of the Institute for Palestine Studies Journal. "But many Palestinians feel that Shamir's conditions are so humiliating his insistence that there will be no exchange of peace for territory so adamant, that they wonder: 'Why bother? Why attend a conference that is tantamount to political surrender?'"

Mr. Arafat wants to show these Palestinians that he is no inert or irrelevant, that he is trying to get the most out of whatever leverage he has, in exchange for letting Palestinians participate. Since many within the PLO flatly oppose the conference, Mr. Arafat desperately needs the support of the sceptical. A few concessions might help him win that — if Washington turns out to be in the mood to give him any concessions at all. Third, his remarks are aimed as much at fellow Arabs as at Washington. Mr. Arafat knows that he must end his parish status among the winners of the Gulf war if he is to survive politically. He un-

doubtedly sees the conference as an occasion to again take his place on the Arab state; in this context, it would make sense for him to set out tough terms for his participation from which he could eventually climb down. Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak might eventually receive — which he has refused to do so far — if that would persuade Mr. Arafat to bestow upon the proposed conference the Palestinian imprimatur that only he can give.

Many analysts believe that Mr. Arafat's position is so weak, though, that in the end he will have no choice but to quietly sanction the conference. With virtually unanimous Arab blessing for the gathering, would the PLO dare risk further marginalising itself by obstructing or scuttling it? After all, many Arabs consider this the Palestinians' best chance of ending almost 21 years of Israeli military occupation and saving the territories from being permanently paved over by Israeli settlements.

"Syria and Jordan might well attend a conference even without the blessing of the PLO," said Marvin Feuerwerker, a senior

strategic fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a research group that is generally pro-Israeli. "While it is true that Hafez Al Assad is sensitive to charges of betraying the Palestinian cause to achieve a separate peace," he said, "I doubt the Syrian president would be happy about letting Arafat, a non-state player whom he despises, veto a gathering he sees as in Syria's best interests."

While most analysts argue that no Arab state could afford to attend a peace conference — even a ceremonial opening — without a "legitimate" Palestinian presence, few think that ultimately Mr. Arafat will continue to say no. He is a shrewd tactician — whatever his deficiencies as a strategist — and he probably understands that, as the shift in Syrian policy reflects, the geographic and political map of the post-cold war world has changed. With communism's global force spent and Iraq destroyed, the old rejectionist tunes of Middle Eastern politics now have a thinner and more hollow... sound. — The New York Times magazine.

The Week in Print

THE plight of the Jordanian-Palestinian community in Kuwait and Jordan's stand with regard to this issue as well as the Middle East question and a number of domestic issues in the country were the dominant topics in the Jordanian Arabic dailies of the past week.

As Jordan witnesses an influx of hundreds of thousands of Jordanians and Palestinians returning from Kuwait, the Israelis welcome hundreds of thousands of new immigrants to be settled in Arab lands, said a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily.

Tareq Masarweh noted that while the Jordanian and Palestinian citizens returning here are being deprived of their rights and evicted by force from Kuwait, the Jewish immigrants are being welcomed to settle in the occupied Palestinian land as the United States continues to process of settling the Jews and fulfilling the dreams of the world Zionism.

The writer said that U.S., which is behind the eviction of the Palestinians from Kuwait, in collusion with certain Arab regimes, is also behind the drive to deny the Palestinians their legitimate rights in their homelands.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said that as long as there are Arab regimes volunteering to offer service to the colonialist powers and exercising repression on the Palestinians and Jordanians this region can find no peace.

The paper said that Kuwait is determined to find in the Jordanian and Palestinian community a scapegoat for its own problems. It is driving out the expatriates in flagrant violation of international principles and all human rights.

Such practice, the paper said, is a shameful and atrocious act by the enemies of Arab and Islamic nations. The paper said that Kuwaitis com-

mitting a crime against hundreds of thousands of innocent people under the eyes of the world community and the United States which has been bragging about human rights worldwide.

The eviction of the thousands of the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates from Kuwait was described by Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist for Al Ra'i daily, as part of the new world order orchestrated by the United States and implemented by Kuwait and other Arab regimes.

The United States has achieved a victory in its war against the Arabs by turning one country against another and by fulfilling the dreams of Israel, the writer noted. He said that Washington has committed the greatest massacre in history by killing the children and women of Iraq and displacing the Palestinians with all the so-called humanitarian organisations keeping silent about these atrocities.

Now that all appeals to the world community to come to the aid of the Palestinians and Jordanians evicted from Kuwait have failed to give any fruitful result, there is urgent need for the government to make moves at the international level, said Ahmad Dabbas in Sawt Al Shaab.

The writer noted that Jordan can not cope with the huge number of immigrants and returnees and can by no means remain silent in the face of repression and injustice exercised by Kuwait.

This year, Jordan is not holding the usual summer conference for the expatriates in view of the ongoing eviction of these expatriates from Kuwait, said Taher Al Udwai in Al Dustour. The writer said that the presence of huge numbers of expatriates who had spent a very long time building Kuwait and acquiring extensive experience in development and construction work should prompt the government to find ways of

facilitating their settlement in the country and direct them towards income generating projects.

The writer said that the Ministry of Industry and Trade can take the lead in this concern by directing the expatriates who hold capital towards useful economic activities and thus help them find a decent way of making a living.

Several writers tackled the outcome of the Islamic countries foreign ministers' conference held in Istanbul.

Salameh Ekour, in Sawt Al Shaab, described the conference as serving the purposes of the NATO alliance and the Zionist ambitions designs. The writer said that the conference, which was supposed to discuss matters related and of concern to the Islamic Nation, directed its attention instead to matters that can be of service to the enemies of Muslims.

The conference, acting upon directions from Washington, has decided against lifting an embargo on Iraq and has ignored the cries of women and children in Iraq subjected to atrocious acts by the U.S.-led alliance.

The writer said that the meeting, which was held in the name of Islam, did all it could to serve the objectives of the enemies of the Islamic faith.

The representatives of the Islamic nations who met in Istanbul forgot their faith and forgot their duty to serve an Islamic Nation in desperate need of help and forgot all about the Islamic teachings, said Mohammad Abdul Khaleq in Sawt Al Shaab daily.

The writer said that the Islamic conference had in fact increased rather than relieve the Iraqi people's sufferings and so the conference was a tool in the hand of the United States which is exercising its hostile practices against the Arab and Islamic nations.

The Jordanian press gave ample attention to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the ongoing efforts to convene a peace con-

ference. Sawt Al Shaab daily said that it is regrettable to see that the Arabs, especially the states directly involved in a confrontation with Israel, fail to hold a meeting to coordinate their positions with regard to the coming conference.

Arab countries realise that Israel wants to steal their water and their lands and wants the Arabs to remain in a weak state, unable to stand up to its ambitious designs, and yet they are unable to hold a single meeting to confront these issues, the paper noted.

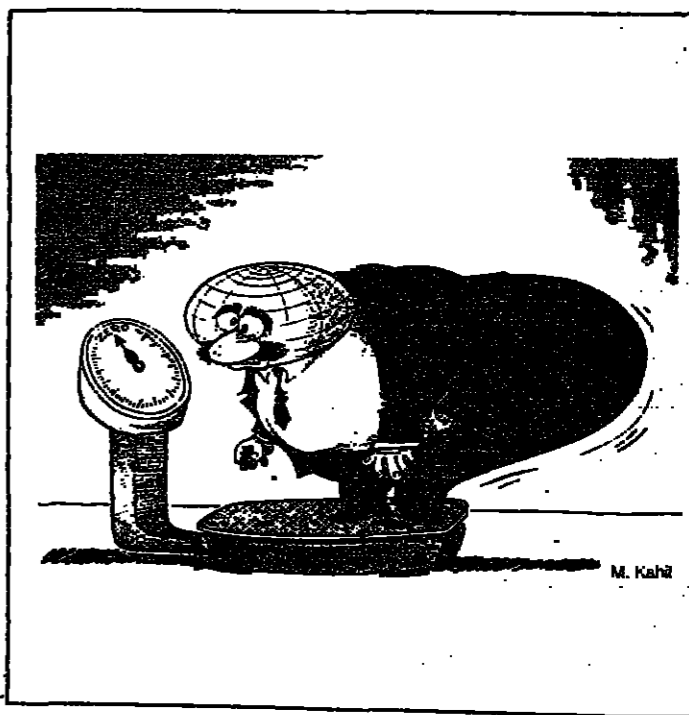
The Arab states are also impotent in the face of the U.S.-Soviet conspiracy of settling Soviet Jews on Arab land and they are going to the peace conference empty handed, the paper said.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said it was shameful that some Arabs plan to sit and talk with Moshe Arens at a time when they continue to shun any meeting with an Iraqi minister. Mazen Al Saket said that it is shameful that the Arab League can not meet unless it is given the order by James Baker. What we demand from the Arabs is not a meeting for war against Israel, rather a meeting to handle Arab-Arab issues in preparation for the coming meeting with Israel, the writer said.

His views were backed by Fahd Al Fanek in Al Ra'i daily who said that Jordan is not against an Arab-Israeli conference but it is rather seeking a concerted stand on the part of the Arab side to the coming negotiations.

The writer said that it is unreasonable for the Arabs to open talks to reach an understanding with the Israelis when they can find no way of reaching an understanding among themselves.

In the midst of talk about a peace conference reports continue to bring us news about Israel's continued drive to build settlements on the occupied Palestinian land with the help of Washington and Mos-



cow, said Salameh Ekour in Sawt Al Shaab.

The writer said that the Soviets carry out their part of the conspiracy by sending Jews to Israel while the U.S. administration continues to pump in funds to finance their settlement in Arab land. Washington continues to brag about the need for Israel to stop the settlements and it tries to appease the Arabs with these words, but in reality it is financing the continued settlement programme, the writer said.

A number of writers tackled the question of the soaring cost of renting homes in Jordan in the wake of the influx of the expatriates.

Ahmad Al Misleh in Al Ra'i daily said that the landlords are in a race against time in this mad and feverish rush to let homes at exorbitant rents, totally disregarding the fact that the expatriates are now in need.

The writer urged the government to tackle this urgent issue and stop further injustices. His views were backed by

Salah Abdul Samad in Al Ra'i daily who said that no one expects the landlords to offer their houses for free, but at least they should offer sympathy to the returnees through offering them homes for reasonable rent.

Mohammad Daoudieh in Al Dustour said that the local landlords and home owners are trying to exploit the expatriates and the Iraqis now living in the country. He urged the government to set up a special committee to make assessments for rents so that the expatriates would pay a reasonable fee, and at the same time have the interests of both parties protected.

A columnist in Al Ra'i called on the government to lower the average grade accepted by Jordanian Universities to 60 per cent from 65 per cent to offer a chance to a greater number of people to acquire university education. Fakhr Kavar said that as long as people want to get education the government should not stop in their way.

King: Palestinians will solve problem over representation

(Continued from page 1)

and Afghans, had confessed to planning a series of attacks against public and financial institutions.

Following are major excerpts from King Hussein's comments in the interview with Reuters and Visnews. A transcript of the interview was made available to the Jordan Times.

In answer to a question on the visit of a U.S. delegation to Jordan and the nature of talks between the two sides, the King said:

"I don't think we are searching for a written agreement... Jordan made it extremely clear that it will participate in the peace process as we are in constant touch. There are many issues that are relatively unclear. The process is the tremendous attempt of all to move as rapidly as possible. I think the dialogue between us and Washington at this stage was the subject of the visit (of the U.S. team). It was related to our most recent discussion with Baker and with regard to the American position as I have worked with it and understood it over so many years.

"I believe that this has come together (progress) extremely rapidly and certainly more in terms of our mutual understanding. The process is leading to acceptance of the national charter, pluralism and political parties. I am willing to do some extra work at this by calling people from Jordanian political life as they were represented in the country to explain every step we make and to discuss the development of the process. We have seen, God knows, here and enough from the developments in the region and in

by now I mean of the process itself we are moving rapidly and the visit of Baker and many friends to the area have given us an indication that the U.S. is very anxious to see progress on this matter and certainly the secretary shares this view and this stems from the feeling that the U.S. can contribute to the solution of this problem and has greater responsibility now in this new world order and a greater potential to do so than in the past when this problem was a part of the cold war or whatever you may call it in the past. The world of yesterday.

"The Palestinian dimension is a very important one and we agree that only they themselves can select a delegation which will represent them and certainly starting with the first phase which is that of territories occupied in 67. We have no preference if they want on their own or choose others. We have offered the umbrella under which a Jordanian delegation would work alongside the Palestinian delegation; they dealing with the Palestinian-Israeli dimension and we working with them on affairs that affect Jordan, obviously separately, in regard to Jordan and Palestine and the whole region when we look at water and problems that exist there. Thirdly within the context of the regional dimension which is also opening up and which I think is an important development because of the participation of countries not immediately concerned — the GCC and others.

Q: Has a decision been taken by Jordan on whether it will participate if the Palestinians don't?

A: I have a feeling that the Palestinians must go and the Palestinians will go and I believe that there is a lot of soul searching. Let us speak very clearly. I can't see any leadership in these extremely difficult and critical times when people are affected and people are suffering. We have seen, God knows, here and enough from the developments in the region and in

the occupied territories, that people can be moderate or hang on to old clichés and taboos when there is really such a problem of such a magnitude that needs to be addressed. So I hope there won't be such problem and things will move.

Q: What advice would you give the PLO chairman when he visits Jordan?

A: Well he is expected. Always he has been welcome to come to Jordan whenever he chose but I believe that matters are moving so rapidly that there is obviously need for such a visit or contacts to be more intense in the time ahead. I won't presume to give anyone advice. We are offering the opportunity of an umbrella if they choose, and I mean the Palestinian people within the Palestinian context, who decide what they wish for a delegation to join us under that umbrella.

Q: What would result from such communications?

A: May be the clarifications of many unclear areas. Much has happened already but there are still some areas that need to be clarified. Coordination on the Arab side has not been as good as it could have been, but we are working on that as well.

Q: Does Your Majesty have any firm plans to visit Egypt or Syria?

A: Possibly Syria in the next few days if an opportunity arises. I have no plans at the moment to visit Egypt, but I have sought to open the way regardless of any personal feelings that might have had as a result of the trauma all of us passed through over the past year to suggest that it is time and it is needed for our people at least to coordinate and compare notes and work together for the attainment of a just and honourable peace the fulfillment of a life-long dream not for us but for generations to come of peace and security in this entire region.

Q: Have been in touch with the Syrian leadership throughout the many years that have passed. It is new. I visited Syria during the period that has passed. I hope that President

Assad will come to visit us in the near future but this time it is my turn again to visit. I have had contact with him today.

Q: Did Assad issue an invitation to you today?

A: He always does and I always do and I hope that it will materialise in the next few days. We are always very frank and very open and we have known each other for many many years and regardless of whether we agree or disagree we kept in touch. Syria took a similar position on the process and on the conference for peace in this region. Some people thought that maybe Syria would be negative and I continued to say that I believe that was not the case, especially after a visit I made during that period and discussions I had with President Assad. I am very happy to see that the rest of developments have taken place.

Q: How will Jordan cope with its immediate problems i.e. the influx of Palestinians from the Gulf?

A: With God's help and the will of the people of Jordan and our determination to keep our heads high and act as human beings and as civilised people. After all they are our people and they are coming back, many of them hoping to transit to the occupied territories and are doing so. Many are facing a real problem because they have the right to return to Gaza but are not permitted to go through Egypt. So if we can secure somehow a transit opportunity for them to get back home through Jordan we will look at that again and see what we could do. Many are coming by air.

Q: Now conditions are terrible in terms of the long nightmare they have endured in terms of their conditions. In terms of what they are coming out with, the suffering in terms of the physical signs of inhuman treatment they were subjected to. Some are apparently on the Iraq-Kuwait border where they have been thrown out, and we have sent a team down there to see who they are and bring them

back home as rapidly as we can. The number has exceeded 270,000 so far and add to that the fact that we have many Iraqis in Jordan who are also in very difficult conditions, seeking medical help, seeking a change, seeking an opportunity for life... We came out of the first economic crisis a couple of years ago which affected all of us due to the fact that Arab states were not able to fulfill their commitment to this country which is a reflection of what has happened on the Palestinian level and has been done again. This is the third wave of people moving to Jordan. We used to receive them from the Gulf during the good times and we will receive them as well to the best of our ability this time and cope with them and with their problems and share with them everything that we can share with them.

Q: And it is delightful to see those who arrive and the sudden smile despite their haggard faces and in many cases they haven't seen the sun for months and months. Some of them are coming back having lived there and having contributed and helped built what ever existed there and whatever exists there. Some of them are third generation and some of them are second generation and for three generations but they are coming home and they are welcome.

In answer to a question over His Majesty's meeting with the foreign ambassadors last week the King said:

We need help. We need to see what we can do but I don't think the world realises what is still continuing to happen in this region and it basically stems from lack of respect for human rights and I am advocating in the future a real serious effort to concentrate on this dimension. To have a charter for human rights in this entire region. But more than that we need help physically. We simply cannot continue to take all strains from every direction with very limited resources available. I think we are doing a wonderful job, but it is impossible for this to continue without their help but

more so the moral weight of the world is needed because after all this is what the world stood for? We were with the world against the occupation of Kuwait and its annexation. We were with the world for a peaceful solution and the reversal of the process which began on Aug. 2 last year and we were with the world with regard to all Security Council resolutions and respect for them.

Q: Yet we have suffered, I believe, for standing for our principles and our ideals and for peace, against human suffering, against damage to our environment and the world over, against all the losses that occurred. This is in the past but this country and this people should not continue to suffer. I do not think that anyone would be proud to say that that was what he stood for.

My appeal was to our friends of the world to take another look and the hope that the media which focused its attention on what was happening throughout the year should not forget to keep an eye on what is happening as well.

Q: Are you worried that it will affect Gulf states' relations with Jordan?

A: I am talking about a humanitarian problem of such a magnitude and of such dimensions that needs to be addressed. I am shocked and I am angry and I am anxious. And we're talking about a people who began returning home since Iraqis began their invasion and this continues to this day.

Q: I remember we used to get rightly upset whenever Israel had expelled Palestinians from their homes and their land... (and now) to see Palestinians and Jordanians being treated in this way! They helped build everything that is there and gave such service and parts of their lives and their efforts is really a sad chapter in the history of this region.

Q: Does Your Majesty regret your stand during the Gulf crisis?

A: I believe we produced a white paper recently which has only the bare outline of what happened because we learned from our history in

the forties, early forties, in the fifties. I think no country did for Palestine or for Palestinian brethren more than Jordan did with its limited resources in terms of its leadership and people. Yet by choosing to remain silent we suffered as a result of the inadequacies and inability of others to do equally as well or to do anything. Well, we felt for the sake of history we have had to put the record straight but even when the hint was that Jordan was producing a white paper with these outlines of these events and what our position was people began to worry and complain. Well, it is out now and I think that the truth will come out that we were not ever conspirators against any other Arab state. We were for a stable area and for a stable region and we certainly did not know of Iraq's intention to use its military when it did or for that matter to use it at all because it has

always called for resolving the problems peacefully amongst Arab states and was very clear in its position against the use of force by any Arab state against another.

I think the crisis developed and developed and none of us would be able to claim that we know all the facts and in the position I was in as the head of the Arab Cooperation Council for that year, second year of its life, it included Egypt, Yemen, Jordan and Iraq. There are ties to Iraq and Kuwait and the Gulf. I had to act and I believe till this day that there might have been a possibility of dealing with this problem within Arab context and reversing events peacefully.

Had I joined those who condemned and spoke openly, although that was very clear in our statements, we would have lost our chance to play a role if we were permitted to play it.

Perez de Cuellar 'very hopeful'

(Continued from page 1)

therefore he understands in refusal to release the detainees."

Israel's chief hostage negotiator said Friday that efforts by Mr. Perez de Cuellar to arrange a prisoner swap were "beginning to bear fruit."

Uri Lubrani, the defence ministry's adviser of Lebanon, was reacting to the report that the U.N. head expected progress within a few weeks.

"I'm glad to hear it," Mr. Lubrani told the Associated Press. "It is something which just proves that the move of the secretary-general is beginning to bear fruit."

Mr. Lubrani did not elaborate but said he was waiting to hear from the U.N. chief on the results of his mission. Mr. Lubrani said he did not receive new informa-

tion on the Israelis missing in Lebanon during his meeting with Mr. Perez de Cuellar in Geneva Wednesday.

In an earlier Israel Radio interview Friday, Mr. Lubrani reiterated that Israel is ready to make "gestures" in exchange for information on the seven missing Israelis.

Mr. Lubrani's remarks lent more credibility to reports that Israel is willing to free some Arab detainees in exchange for information, even before Israeli soldiers are released.

Asked specifically about a detainees-for-information swap, Mr. Lubrani responded: "We said that after we receive this information, Israel will do everything it can... among other things, it will also be ready to make gestures."

Mideast parley could be a chess game for players

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Americans want to show the world that they are serious about peace in the Middle East in the post-Gulf war era. Israel, for its part, hopes to gain time. And the Arabs will pay the price for what those two countries want to do if the Arab World continues to remain in a state of disunity. This is the expert opinion of veteran Egyptian journalist Philippe Gellab who is currently visiting Jordan to look at and assess how far the U.S.-led peace process has reached.

"The Arab World has never been so bewildered, weak and disoriented in its history as it is today," asserted Mr. Gellab, chief editor of Cairo's Al-Ahali daily, organ of the opposition Progressive Nationalist Unionist Party. "Instead of going to negotiations with Israel from a position of strength, the Arabs have only disunity and dismemberment to show as their assets now," he maintained.

According to Mr. Gellab, "the Arabs will get nowhere through the peace conference planned by the U.S." if only because the entire approach to the issues at stake is wrong.

"After invoking international legitimacy and United Nations resolutions to justify their war against Iraq, and rejecting the Kuwait-Palestine linkage, the U.S. is now trying to show the world that it was serious when it said (during the Gulf

crisis) that the issue of Palestine would be taken up after punishing the 'aggressor' in the Gulf." Mr. Gellab told the Jordan Times in an interview. "They want to show they have no double standards and are taking an even-handed approach to all issues."

"Instead of applying the same principles and approach to Israel as they did in the case of Iraq, the Americans are now talking about 'confidence-building' measures among the Arabs and Israel," he said. "There is the Security Council and there are the relevant resolutions which are very clear on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem. Why can't they seek to enforce the resolutions without having to appease Israel?" he asked.

"As usual, Israel is stalling for time," said Mr. Gellab, who is also a columnist for Rose Al Youssef, one of the oldest Egyptian magazines. Mr. Gellab, who had worked for other Egyptian newspapers such as Al-Akhar, Al-Jomhuriyyeh and Al-Messa before he assumed the editorship of the outspoken Al-Ahali two years ago, noted that his Progressive Nationalist Unionist Party — which now has five seats in the Egyptian parliament — fiercely opposed the Camp David agreements since they did not offer an all-embracing solution to the entire Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. Gellab maintained that "Israel's obstinate attitude will undermine all serious negotia-

tions at the proposed peace conference." He expects "repeated adjournments of negotiating sessions leading to a prolonged process, which will give Israel the time it needs to further consolidate its position."

"It will become a vicious circle taking us nowhere," he said.

Even if the negotiations produce substance, "what are the Arabs going to get out of it? Even less than what was envisaged in the Camp David agreements?"

However, Mr. Gellab said, "it is very unlikely that the negotiations would lead to separate agreements" between Israel and its neighbours without properly addressing the Palestinian problem. "There is no doubt that the central issue, for all Arabs concerned, is the Palestinian problem, and I do not see a situation where any of the Arab parties involved would drop the Palestinian cause and go ahead with separate peace accords with Israel."

Mr. Gellab's "declared role" in the Middle East peace process, he said, is that of a "co-sponsor" of negotiations. In any event, "I cannot see Egypt, at any level, abandoning its basic commitment to the Palestinian cause," he added.

For any peace talks to succeed to the point where Arab rights are secured, "there has to be a unified and coordinated Arab stand based on a position of strength," he said. "And that is missing today in the Arab World."

"Isn't it ironic that the Arab states have everything individually and nothing collectively?" he asked.

The first step towards joint Arab action, Mr. Gellab asserted, is setting the differences caused by

the Gulf crisis and "reintegrating Iraq into mainstream Arab politics."

"Iraq is an integral part of the Arab World, and it is ridiculous for anyone to try to isolate Iraq from the Arab scene," he said. "We cannot punish the Iraqi people for the actions of their regime." He urged the Arab countries to "urgently seek to end the sanctions on Iraq."

"Simultaneously, there have to be immediate moves towards reestablishing contacts on the popular level as well as official level with Iraq," he said. "These have to be done within a framework of Arab political and economic integration — an objective which has eluded the Arab World for decades."

Mr. Gellab, who delivered a lecture entitled "The Arabs after the Gulf Catastrophe" at the Shoman Foundation Monday evening, said Egypt's image was "totally damaged" since "what (Cairo) did was to legitimise America's illegal actions against Iraq."

According to Mr. Gellab, the financial gains that Egypt secured for its leading anti-Iraq role do not cover the actual losses of the country resulting from the Gulf crisis.

"Two million Egyptians lost their jobs, exports suffered badly and expatriate remittances shrunk," he said. "Tourism came to a standstill. The overall loss of the country was much more than what Egypt got in terms of direct financial assistance from the Gulf states and Europe."

Mr. Gellab ridiculed the partial debt write-off that Europe has offered to Egypt. "They will cancel 15 per cent in the first year, and another 15 per cent after assessing the (performance) of the economy in one year, and another 20 per cent after further study," he pointed out.

"It is a four-year process, and if

you put it together the net value of the write-off is not much," he said, describing creditors' behaviour towards Egypt as "similar to that of the mafia."

Egypt has "paid much more in interest" on the \$7.5 billion military debts that were written off by the U.S., according to Mr. Gellab. He said Egyptian-Israeli relations were never cordial despite the Camp David agreement and that he expected the situation to continue although Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy visited Egypt last month.

"Egypt's attitude towards Israel will improve only if there is 'real peace' in the Middle East with a proper solution to the Palestinian problem. This is the position of not only the government but also the people."

Directly referring to the fierce anti-Jordanian campaign in some of the Egyptian media during the Gulf crisis, Mr. Gellab described as "most unfortunate the trend in the Arab information media to launch personal attacks, to lack in objectivity and to practise abrupt shifts in positions and opinions."

According to Mr. Gellab, whose newspaper has a daily circulation of 110,000 copies and a readership close to half a million, "the majority of the Egyptian people respected Jordan's position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis."

In fact, most Egyptians "shared the same views and positions as those adopted by Jordan during the crisis," he said. "Al-Ahali sought to project these views and propagate the concept of Arab unity and solidarity during the crisis."

Although formal Egyptian-Jordanian relations are "cool" in the post-war era, he said, "there is a more mature and moderate" approach in the Egyptian media towards Jordan.

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Puerto Rico beats U.S. in Pan Am basketball

HAVANA (AP) — The U.S. men's amateur basketball team is a loser again, and this time there's no tomorrow.

The Americans lost 73-68 to Puerto Rico in semifinals of the Pan American Games tournament Thursday night, extending their string of losses in major international tournaments to five.

The next time the team goes to battle in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, though, the gun will be fully loaded. No more 19-year-old college players, no more pink cheeks and bony elbows, no more baggy trunks and pimples.

Next time, the team will have NBA players with mature beards, brawny shoulders and jump shots that miss only with the hand of another NBA player raised in opposition.

"When they bring in the NBA, everybody will be fighting for second place on down. It'll be no contest once these guys start playing," Puerto Rico coach Ray Dalmau said.

Dalmau's team had eight former U.S. college players on the roster, three of whom now play professionally in Spain and two of whom used to play in the NBA. And he recognized this as his last, best chance to beat the United States.

That realization does not dawn altogether happily upon the members of this U.S. team. Gold was their aim, and they missed. Now, they have to play Cuba for a bronze medal Saturday. Mexico beat Cuba 93-87 in the other semifinal and will meet Puerto Rico for the gold.

"People back home are just going to say, 'let's get Jordan and Johnson out there and a bunch of 30-year-old guys, and let's beat up somebody,'" said Christian Laettner. "That's fine with me if that's what they want, but I don't think that's what this is all about."

With just three days left in the games, the United States held a commanding lead of 307-234 over Cuba in total medals but still trailed in golds 118-115.

America's baseball team was expected to return to action Friday afternoon with a shot at

adding to the medal count. But first it will have to do what the basketball team couldn't — beat Puerto Rico. Cuba plays the Dominican Republic in the other semifinal.

"We're ready to get this thing going and get it over with and hopefully come back with a nice medal," U.S. coach Ron Polk said.

The U.S. team beat Puerto Rico 10-3 last Saturday, but the Puerto Ricans have won three in a row since.

The United States had only four of its 12 fighters alive in the boxing tournament after two fights Thursday night. Kenny Friday, at 29 the oldest man on the U.S. team, fought his way into a gold-medal match Sunday by beating Arnulfo Castillo of Mexico in the 125-pound (57-kilogramme) division. The other American, Michael Demoss, lost a decision to Chris Johnson of Canada in the 165-pound (75-kilogramme) division.

Friday will meet Arnaldo Mesa of Cuba in Sunday's finals.

"He's got a good job, but it doesn't seem like he punches very hard," Friday said. "So we're going to see if we can work inside on him."

While the United States was looking to add to its medal count, Peru had one taken away. Pedro Garcia, a silver medal-winning shooter, Thursday was named as the third athlete of the games disqualified for taking banned substances.

Garcia's tests showed traces of the drug propranolol, a medication that slows the heartbeat and could help a shooter improve his aim.

Not since the 1986 World Championships has a U.S. basketball team come away with a gold medal in major international event. Since that time, the Americans have come up short in the 1987 Pan American Games, the 1990 Olympics, and the 1990 Goodwill Games and World Championships.

Experience, size and the absence of U.S. swingman Jim Jackson, who had been averaging 18 points, were the determining factors for the Puerto Ricans on

Thursday night.

A bone scan Tuesday revealed that Jackson had a hairline fracture in his left foot, and doctors decided Wednesday to immobilize the foot in a cast. Jackson said he sustained the fracture as long ago as April in tryouts for the team.

"Jimmy was averaging 18 points, so it was a factor, but who knows how much," U.S. coach Gene Keady said.

The U.S. team led 37-29 at halftime and took a 10-point lead on a jumper by Anthony Bennett with 17:47 left in the second half. It was then that things started to unravel.

Trailing 49-41, Puerto Rico went on a 9-2 run to trail 51-50 with 10:06 left. Centre Jose Ortiz, who played briefly with Utah of the NBA, started the run with a three-point play. Puerto Rico took its first lead of the second 57-55, on a 3-pointer by Edwin Pellot and put away the Americans by holding them scoreless for a four-minute stretch that ended with 48 seconds to play and Puerto Rico leading 71-64.

"In the second half, their big guys had the edge, and that hurt us," U.S. coach Gene Keady said. "We had the opportunity and didn't use it. We got beat. Puerto Rico is a little more used to international play. I hoped that wouldn't hurt us in the second half, but it did."

For his players, and their type, Keady said it was a sad day because now the NBA players take over, and when they do, "it won't be any contest."

In boxing, eight Cubans already have made the finals, with three more fighting Friday night. No more U.S. boxers fight until the finals.

Patrice Brooks already boxed his way into the 132-pound finals, while two other U.S. fighters got in through the backdoor.

Heavyweight Shannon Briggs drew a bye into the heavyweight finals, where he'll meet Felix Savon of Cuba, and Steve Johnson earned a spot at 139 pounds (63 kilogramme) when his semifinal opponent, Luis Basalva of Brazil, broke his finger.

Jordan hopes for good results at Olympic basketball preliminaries

By Ahmad Ismail
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Despite the two recent upsets of the Jordanian national team against the Iraqis, the Jordanian Basketball Federation (JBF) was optimistic that it would get remarkable results in the Olympic Asian preliminaries to be held in Japan on Aug. 27.

Isa Ammary, the JBF secretary general, told the Jordan Times, that the Jordanian Team, due to play in Group B, also including South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Sri Lanka, is capable of qualifying to the second round of the preliminaries and can even reach the quarterfinals provided that they overpower Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

The only obstacle will be the South Korean team, who beat the Jordanian team 98-94 in the 1986 Asian Games held in Seoul.

Mr. Ammary said that the Jordanian team has to play a series of warm up matches before leaving for Japan. "Nevertheless, they can qualify for the second round if they rank second in Group B."

If the Jordanian team finishes second, it is expected to meet North Korea and China on Aug. 28 and 29, if these teams qualify for the second round.

If Jordan tops Group B, it is expected to play the same teams but will enjoy more of a break between games.

Mr. Ammary said that Japan and China will be the favourite teams in the preliminaries because of their talent and potential. He said most predictions centred on China and the Philippines to qualify from Group A.

Korea and Jordan from Group B, North Korea and Taiwan from Group C and Japan and Iran from Group D.

He said the JBF has sent the final list of the national team to the Asian federation.

The team is composed of Murad Barakat, Hilal Barakat, Nasir Bushma, Samir Marqus, Yousef Zaglou, Marwan Ma'nuq, Jihad Sliba, Walid Badran, Ramiz Hamouda, Marwan Al Saidi and Abdul Latif Abu Qura.

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Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.6855	1.6871
Deutsche Mark	1.5353	1.5378
Swiss Franc	1.5220	1.5267
French Franc	5.9130	5.9180
Japanese Yen	136.73	136.49
European Currency Unit	1.1800	1.1752

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.56	5.56	5.68	5.97
Sterling Pound	10.81	10.81	10.62	10.56
Deutsche Mark	9.18	9.25	9.37	9.43
Swiss Franc	7.75	7.81	7.81	7.75
French Franc	9.47	9.50	9.62	9.71
Japanese Yen	7.74	7.31	7.06	6.81
European Currency Unit	9.68	9.43	10.00	10.00

Previous Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	327.75	6.90	Silver	3.96	0.06

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.688	.690
Sterling Pound	1.1594	1.1556
Deutsche Mark	.5555	.5676
Swiss Franc	.4524	.4547
French Franc	.1163	.1169
Japanese Yen	.5032	.5057
Dutch Guilder	.3509	.3527
Swedish Krona	.1090	.1095
Italian Lira	.0528	.0531
Belgian Franc	.01923	.01933

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7850	1.8000
Lebanese Lira	.0750	.0770
Saudi Riyal	.1830	.1836
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.8000	1.8000
Qatari Riyal	.1862	.1870
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7450	1.7600
UAE Dirham	.1862	.1870
Greek Drachma	.3550	.3650
Cypriot Pound	1.4250	1.4550

CAB Index for Amman Financial Market

Index	13/8/1991 Close	14/8/1991 Close
All-Share	108.94	109.15
Banking Sector	102.80	103.01
Insurance Sector	118.71	118.75
Industry Sector	115.28	115.46
Services Sector	126.97	127.38

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.6725/35	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1438/43	Canadian dollar
	1.7470/80	Deutsche marks
	1.9700/10	Dutch guilders
	1.5320/27	Swiss francs
	36.01/05	Belgian francs
	5.9400/50	French francs
	1309/1310	Italian lire
	136.80/90	Japanese yen
	6.3525/75	Swedish crowns
	6.8360/10	Norwegian crowns
	6.7560/10	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	357.25/357.75	U.S. dollars

Blockade on Iraq hinders growth Jordanian industries slowly weather Gulf war fallout

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian industries are slowly recovering from the fallout of the Gulf crisis, but market analysts and businessmen say, as long as the international trade embargo on Iraq remains in place in its present form of enforcement the path towards recovery will be slow.

While some sectors, including the potash and cement industries, registered highly positive results during the year, others, by and large, suffered badly during the last five months of 1990, following the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Market analysts point that expansion projects under study or implementation by some of the Jordanian industries cannot be considered as part of the natural growth during or after the Gulf crisis since most of them have been planned years ago and suspended when the economy was hard hit by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The phosphates sector — which depends heavily on the relative edge it enjoys in freight costs to Asian and Far Eastern countries over North African competitors — saw a decline of \$65.8 million in net profits as a result of difficulties posed by the enforcement of the sanctions against Iraq.

However, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company is pressing ahead with plans to set up fertilizer plants in collaboration with Japanese and Indian firms.

Wood industries — mostly furniture manufacturers — are expanding their businesses. This is attributed to the high cost of imported furniture and

innovative ideas by local manufacturers.

Industries planning expansion include the Arab Potash Company, the Jordan Paper and Cardboard Factories Company, and the Jordan Glass Industries Company, but these proposals have been in the pipeline for several years and were frozen as the impact of the Gulf crisis took its toll on the Jordanian economy.

Amman Chamber of Industry Director-General Mohammad Halaika was recently quoted as saying that the good results registered by some Jordanian companies were mostly related to their activities prior to August 1990 and that they would have done much better had the situation remained normal for the rest of the year.

In general, according to Ali Dajani, senior advisor to the Chamber of Industry, the losses suffered by some industries by far outweigh the gains registered by others.

Dr. Dajani cited as an indicator the gradual drop in the industrial production index to 121 points in February 1991 from 209 points in August 1990.

However, he added, the sector has reversed course as indicated by the rise in the index to 148 points in April 1991. "The industrial sector is indeed recovering and this is a good step," he said.

At the same time, as long as Jordanian industries have to suffer from the delays and extra (transportation and insurance) costs caused by the naval blockade at Aqaba, the recovery rate will be slow, Dr. Dajani told the Jordan Times.

"Industrial importers are paying high costs for getting

their raw material to Jordan," he said. "The blockade is as tight as ever and importers come up with unexpected delays and high expenses," he said.

He cited a recent case involving hundreds of containers destined for Jordan. The ship was not allowed to dock at Aqaba by the enforcers of the embargo on grounds that the consignees' addresses were not clear and they suspected that the cargo was bound for Iraq.

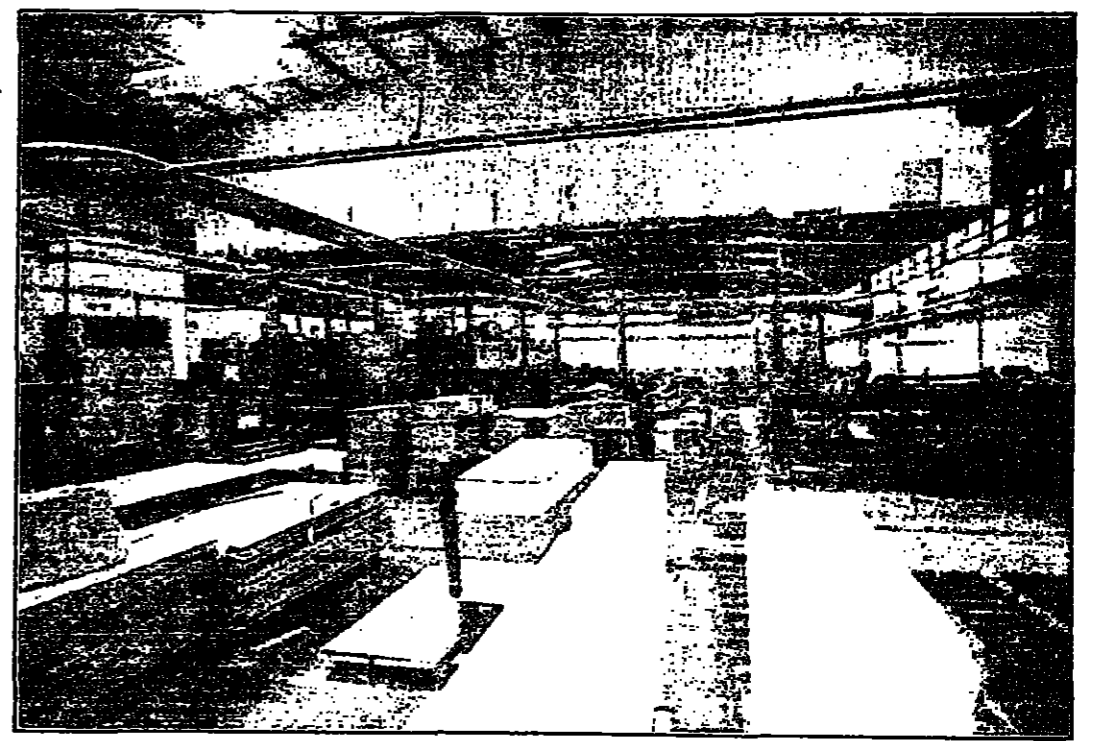
As a result, the containers were unloaded at another Red Sea port and now consignees are asked to pay between \$600 and \$1,250 extra per container as extra charges.

According to a shipping source, "such cases have been quite frequent, and this has adversely affected many industries whose products cannot fetch any higher prices in the local market." In addition, many industries have also abandoned or frozen expansion plans, he noted.

Dr. Dajani also noted that there is a rising number of industrial units which have defaulted their loan repayment to banks and are now facing legal action. "Legal notices announcing the sale of real estate, machinery or other assets (of industrial units) are appearing in the newspaper daily as a result of the inability of the concerned firms or persons to meet their liabilities to banks," he said.

Bank credits to the industrial sector increased from JD 222 million in January 1990 to JD 240 million in August 1990 and remains at the same level today, he said.

Bankers say that importers were resorting to higher amounts of imports to build stocks, and thus the relatively



Jordanian wood industries are expanding their business as a result of rising prices of imported

furniture and their own innovative ideas (File photo).

high level of loans taken from banks by industrial importers.

"Importers have found that it is relatively cheaper and better in terms of avoiding delays in delivery to build stocks of raw material in Jordan," said a prominent banker.

Senior officials as well as analysts believe that the overall Jordanian exports will be at the same level, if not higher than that of 1990 — JD 706 million.

Food and pharmaceutical industries catering to the needs of the Iraqi market are doing well and their exports will rise considerably once Iraq is given access to its frozen funds abroad, businessmen point out.

Pharmaceuticals are also expected to increase their volume of exports to other Arab markets as well as some European countries, economists say.

Nearly 75 new companies with a capital of over JD 9 million have been registered in

1991, but the impact of their contribution to the national industrial growth and exports cannot be assessed before the end of 1992.

Economic experts believe that a sizeable amount of savings brought in by expatriates returning from Kuwait and other Gulf states could find its

way to the financial market, either in the form of portfolio investments or venture capital.

"It is too early to judge what form these investments will take, but it is sure that a good part of these funds will be available in Jordan for those with creative ideas to tap," said an economic expert.

Iliescu promulgates privatisation law

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanian President Ion Iliescu promulgated a privatisation law Thursday seen as the cornerstone of government reforms to end four decades of communist-style economy.

Passed by parliament two weeks ago, the law has stirred controversy. Opposition groups have accused the ruling National Salvation Front (NSF) of sponsoring a bill which was "anti-democratic and not acceptable for the country's major interests."

But Mr. Iliescu waved aside appeals by several Romanian opposition parties and trade union blocs urging him not to promulgate the law but to send back to parliament instead.

"All political groups agree that privatisation is a key element of a market economy," Mr. Iliescu said in a televised statement. "The law which I have promulgated does not cover all the aspects of privatisation. It covers only the privatisation of commercial companies."

Under the legislation, one third

of state business will be distributed to the population through vouchers which could be used to buy shares.

The rest will be privatised by the government piecemeal through public auctions, direct sell-offs and joint ventures. Western analysts consider the law one of the most ambitious privatisation projects among east Europe's new democracies, which are struggling with the transition to a market economy since their communist regimes were overthrown in 1989.

"The privatisation law covers 6,000 Romanian commercial firms, and 17 million adult Romanians will be able to become shareholders," Mr. Iliescu said. He said the National Privatisation Agency would select 30 companies to go first through the limus test of privatisation.

Trade and tourism could take the lead. "In approximately six months there will be not more state-owned trade firms," a trade and tourism ministry spokesman told Romanian television.

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announces to the parents of their students: Completion of registration, payment of fees, bus arrangements and receipt of books will be carried out between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in the old building according to the following schedule:

August 24 — Grades 9 - 12
August 25 — Grades 5 - 8
August 26 — Grades KG - 4

Classes will begin in the new building in Sweifiyyeh for this scholastic year.

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AMERICAN RISCO
Show: 3:30, 6:45, 10:30 p.m.
POLICE ACADEMY "6"
Show: 5:15, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144
PHILADELPHIA
ELVIRA
Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30.

Cinema Tel: 675571
NUJUM
To Be Opened Soon
Nabil Mashini Theatre
Show: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155
RAINBOW
TOM SELLECK — IN RUNAWAY
Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.



P.V. Narasimha Rao

Indian premier calls for end to separatism

NEW DELHI (AP) — Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has called on separatist rebels in the state of Punjab and Kashmir to eschew violence and pledged to work with them to resolve their grievances.

Meanwhile, paramilitary policemen killed at least 20 people in a daylong gun battle Thursday with Muslim militants in the Kashmir town of Sopore, news reports said.

General Strikes were called in Kashmir and Punjab Thursday. Muslim militants have called general strikes on Aug. 15 every year since the long-simmering separatist movement gained popular support.

The prime minister marked the anniversary with a speech that offered no promises of amnesty to the rebels. But his remarks, given under tight security, were a departure from the usual hard line followed by the government.

They also spelled out for the first time the course the 55-day-old government plans to follow in tackling the insurrections launched by religious minorities.

"I want to make it clear, nothing will be gained by terrorism," Mr. Rao said after unfurling the national flag on the entrance to the 16-century red fort in the heart of the capital.

The rebels "can never realise their objectives in this way," he said. "Let them come forward, we can all find a solution. There is no problem to which a solution cannot be found."

In Punjab, a rich farming state, at least 3,750 people have been killed this year in a relentless war by Sikh rebels to form an independent homeland. The rebels have been active since 1982.

At least 2,500 have died since Muslim separatists in the Kashmir Valley began fighting for independence in 1990.

Indian news agencies said 10 more people were killed since Wednesday night in Kashmir. Press Trust of India (PTI) quoted state government officials as saying that all the 20 people killed in Sopore were militants. The report could not be independently confirmed.

The news agency said one policeman was killed and eight others were injured in the gun battle in Sopore, 55 kilometres northwest of Srinagar, the centre of the secessionist movement.

PTI said security forces killed four militants last Wednesday in Anantnag near Sopore. Three more militants and two civilians were killed in separate incidents Wednesday and Thursday, the report said. It did not give details.

PTI and United News of India (UNI) news agency said normal life was badly hit by the general strike. They did not elaborate.

Mr. Rao accused neighbouring Pakistan of supporting the rebellions, a charge often levelled by New Delhi.

Islamabad had denied the accusation. Pakistan, an Islamic nation, says it does not aid terrorism in either state but supports the right of Kashmiris to self-determination.

Mr. Rao's address from the ramparts of the sandstone fort was made under heavy police guard. The audience, mostly of government officials, diplomats and some local residents, passed through metal detectors before being allowed to their seats.

Dogs trained to detect explosives patrolled the venue before the ceremony began. Mirrors attached to long sticks were used to search under the chassis of cars parked near the fort.

Kashmir, made up of a wide valley and lush mountains, was a princely state that was split between India and Pakistan when the two countries were born in the partition of British colonial India in August 1947.

India celebrates its independence on Aug. 15, while Pakistan does so a day earlier.

U.N.: Amnesty agreed for S. African exiles

GENEVA (R) — The South African government has agreed with the United Nations to grant a general amnesty to political exiles who fled apartheid rule, a U.N. official said Friday.

The United Nations set a general amnesty as a condition for agreeing to help repatriate thousands of exiles. Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) wanted an amnesty before starting constitution talks with the government.

Nicolas Bwakira, head of the African division of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said oral agreement was reached with South Africa's ambassador in Geneva, Albert Manley, and a document would be initiated later Friday.

Mr. Bwakira said the agreement did not apply to those detained within South Africa.

It applied to all who had left South Africa before Oct. 8, 1990, with the government expressing willingness to consider cases of those who have left after that date.

South African newspapers said Friday the amnesty could cover up to 40,000 exiles who fled apartheid rule.

"All political offences (of those who left) are granted amnesty. No-one should be prosecuted for

a political offence which may have been committed before going into exile or while in exile," Mr. Bwakira said.

"What is excluded here (from the amnesty) is serious common law crimes," he said, adding that the agreement goes into detail to try to distinguish between political offences and crimes such as theft.

The agreement will allow the United Nations to establish its first presence in the country in more than 30 years, the UNHCR said.

It plans to send representatives in 10 to 15 days to try to ensure those returning are not mistreated.

"The high commissioner wishes to have access to all those people who are returning in order to be able to verify the respect of the provisions of this amnesty," Mr. Bwakira said.

UNHCR officers will have free access anywhere in the country to the returnees, who also will have complete freedom of movement within the country.

The agreement, to be signed in a few days after Friday's initialing, also provides for a mechanism allowing the UNHCR to make representations for those not granted amnesty.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata hailed the accord, reached

after 501 days of negotiations. "For UNHCR, this agreement marks the beginning of the end of 30-year-long human tragedy," she said in a statement.

For South Africa, it is a giant step toward the construction of a society where all South Africans enjoy basic human rights.

The UNHCR now intends to launch an appeal for 35 million to \$40 million to help repatriate up to 40,000 exiles. Several governments have expressed a willingness to give money, and the UNHCR intends to ask South Africa to contribute as well.

The money would help with registering and transporting exiles and also the cost of settling them back in South Africa.

Mr. Bwakira said the UNHCR had rejected a text proposed Wednesday by South Africa because it did not provide for a general amnesty.

The government has hitherto permitted only selective amnesties for returning exiles and only for the crime of leaving the country illegally.

The South African newspaper Business Day said before the agreement was reached that if the deal was confirmed it would demonstrate President F.W. de Klerk's firm commitment to removing final obstacles to negotiations on a non-racial constitution.

Yugoslavia truce shattered; 3 dead but 77 prisoners swapped

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Federal officials organised the exchange of 77 prisoners Thursday after fierce artillery duels shattered Croatia's fragile truce and one Croatian guardman and two civilians were reported killed.

Members of a federal monitoring commission, alarmed the eight-day-old ceasefire might be in danger, hurried to Croatia's eastern Slavonia region to negotiate with warring Serbs and Croats and pin blame for violations.

Croatian Interior Ministry officials said 77 prisoners — 43 Serbs and 34 Croats — had been exchanged in Slavonia Thursday evening under the auspices of the federal monitors. About 100 prisoners from both sides had already been exchanged earlier this week.

The day began with more violence though. A member of Croatia's National Guard was killed in fighting around Kostajnica, a strategic town south of Zagreb, Croatia's Defence Ministry said.

Croatian TV reported two civilians had been found dead near the town of Petrinja, some 40 kilometres north of Kostajnica. It gave no further details of when or how the two died.

The Croats lost control of Kostajnica, a key link between Serb-held areas in eastern and southern Croatia, two weeks ago. They re-entered the town when Serb insurgents bypassed it, but have

fought almost daily battles to keep it.

More than 200 people have died in fighting after Croatia declared independence June 25. The fragile ceasefire took effect on Aug. 7, but has been violated dozens of times and at least 16 people have been reported killed.

Prayers were said in churches throughout Roman Catholic Croatia for peace as the battle-scarred republic marked the Feast of the Assumption.

In Osijek, a town of 130,000 at the centre of Slavonia, 43 Serbs were released from the local jail, the Interior Ministry officials said.

The 34 Croats were released in Borovo Selo, the base for ethnic Serb militias in the breadbasket region.

The exchange was carried out at 9 p.m. (1900 GMT), the officials said but gave no further details.

Osijek residents had suffered a sleepless night as fierce artillery barrages echoed from the nearby village of Tenja.

The village is divided into an old Serb and a new Croat area. The two have fought several battles since early July.

Mortar shells even hit outer Osijek suburbs, forcing residents to spend the night in special shelters, the Yugoslav News Agency Tanjug said.

The bombardments were said

to be the fiercest in the Osijek area since the ceasefire was proclaimed. The region has barely known a day's peace even during the truce.

Artillery duels also were fought between the Croat-held village of Sarvas and the nearby Serb-held stronghold of Bijelo Brdo.

Fierce clashes also were reported from around Beli Manastir, a town nestled close to the Hungarian border in eastern Croatia.

The Croatian Defence Ministry also reported that Serbian insurgents and the federal army took over Croatia TV's main transmitter in western Croatia and started broadcasting Belgrade TV Wednesday.

Western Croatia is the site of the Serb enclave of Krajina, which has proclaimed autonomy from Croatia. Croatia accuses the federal army, which says it is a buffer between the two sides, of backing the Serbs.

Serbia, Yugoslavia's largest republic, says Croatia can leave Yugoslavia, but cannot take along the 600,000 Serbs in the republic, nor their territory.

Croatia has lost control of an estimated 18.5 per cent of its territory, but vows not to cede an inch of land to the Serbs.

The conflict has been inflamed by fear and fierce propaganda war on both sides.

Armenian militants free 3 Soviet military hostages

MOSCOW (R) — Armenian rebels Friday freed three captured Soviet soldiers but were still holding another 38, Soviet News Agency (TASS) reported.

The rebels seized the soldiers this week and held them as hostages in a bid to secure the release of an arrested Armenian militant leader known as "Napoleon."

The servicemen were captured this week in Nagorno-Karabakh — a largely-Armenian enclave inside the southern Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Soviet Interior Ministry warned Thursday it was prepared to use force to free the hostages. TASS said tense negotiations between Interior Ministry General Valery Starikov and the rebels, through an intermediary from the separatist Armenian government, resumed Friday.

"There were ultimatums and sharp declarations by both sides. But the release of three hostages shows that attempts to resolve the problem peacefully are yielding results," TASS said.

The Armenian groups are demanding the release of militant leader Zhura Petrosyan, known to his followers as "Napoleon."

The Interior Ministry earlier rejected guerrilla demands for the release of 15 Armenians detained by Soviet security forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh region over the past three months.

Interior Ministry troops are attempting to round up and disarm Armenian groups operating in the region and on the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Hundreds of people have been killed over the last three years in the conflict over control of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Armenian government claims sovereignty over Nagorno-Karabakh but denies any link with groups fighting in the area. President Levon Ter-Petrosyan had several militant leaders arrested last year after Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev ordered all armed groups to disband.

TASS said an official of the local Azeri administration in Nagorno-Karabakh was wounded Thursday night when an assailant threw a grenade through a window of a government car and fled. A driver was also injured in the attack.

Arkansas governor to probe possible challenge to Bush

WASHINGTON (R) — A decision by Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton to explore a possible challenge to President George Bush next year injects new life into the 1992 presidential campaign.

While stressing he had not made up his mind, Mr. Clinton told reporters in Little Rock Thursday he was trying to gauge his financing and organisational resources and would decide by the end of September whether to seek the Democratic nomination.

Asked point-blank whether Mr. Bush could be defeated, Mr. Clinton hedged, saying that Mr. Bush would clearly win the election were tomorrow but adding he could not say what would happen next November.

"I don't mind contending with him or with his administration when I think they're wrong, but the most urgent thing is to say what we would do differently," he added.

Mr. Clinton's move eased fears of Democratic party strategists that there would be a dearth of contenders able to grab the public's eye and raise the vast sums of money required to mount an effective campaign against Mr. Bush.

So far, only one other Democrat has put his hat in the ring for 1992, former Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas.

Party professionals are unenthusiastic about Mr. Tsongas's prospects, however, and lament that the shortage of strong candidates reinforces an impression that Mr. Bush is unbeatable following his smashing Gulf war victory.

Mr. Clinton predicted that ultimately four of five Democrats would battle for the chance to oppose Mr. Bush in November 1992.

Gen. John Galvin, commander of NATO forces in Europe, is a former command of VII Corps.

In its announcement on withdrawals from Europe, the army said four of VII Corps' main elements, including VII Corps artillery and the 2nd Support Command, will be removed by March 15. VII Corps headquarters will disband by April 15.

The army also said four units in Germany will return to the United States.

The 17th Field Artillery Brigade's headquarters and headquarters battery, as well as its 6th Battalion, will move to Fort Sill, Oklahoma; the 7th Engineer Brigade's headquarters and headquarters company will go to Fort Lewis, Washington and the headquarters and headquarters company of the 4th Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division will go to Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

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The VII Corps and its war exploits are revered in today's army.

"The combat operations of VII Corps in World War II is what all future generations of the army study at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas," said Maj. Pete Keating of the Army Public Office in the Pentagon.

The army has known for weeks it would remove one of its two corps from Europe. The decision on choosing which has been wrenching, especially because many of the army's top brass have been a part of one or the other corps.

Gen. Colin Powell, the no. 1 uniformed officer as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is a former Commander of V Corps.

Hope fades for eight missing in South China Sea barge sinking

HONG KONG (AP) — Rescuers searched desperately through the stormy South China Sea for a second day Friday for eight men missing in the sinking of a derrick barge, including four trapped in a decompression chamber.

Rescuers feared the worst for all eight. Among the 13 confirmed dead from Thursday's accident was the American skipper Billy Young, said George Stapleton, a representative of the barge's owner.

Mr. Stapleton, of McDermott (South East Asia) Pte Ltd. of Singapore, said Friday the company will begin an investigation soon into the cause of the accident. He said the barge had followed safety rules.

"We have an established

typhoon abandonment procedure," he said. "That procedure was followed, as it was for the two or three typhoons we've had this work season."

McDermott's parent company is headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana.

A Hong Kong Marine Department official said rescuers were using an underwater camera to try and locate the decompression chamber because conditions were considered still too dangerous for divers.

Two specially trained divers from Singapore were on standby to try to free the three Britons and a New Zealander trapped in the chamber, said Trevor Berry, spokesman for the Hong Kong Maritime Rescue Centre.

But the air supply in the cham-

ber was to have run out at 6 a.m. (2200 GMT) Thursday.

"It is very sad but I think we have got to accept that we have probably lost these eight missing men now," Mr. Berry said. "But we shall keep searching in the hope that a miracle might happen."

There were 195 people on the Singapore-owned vessel, the derrick barge 29, when it capsized, and sank in Typhoon Fred 105 kilometres east of Hong Kong Wednesday. The barge was working on an oil exploration project with China.

Hong Kong government information services said 174 members of the multinational crew were rescued alive in an air-and-sea operation and 13 were confirmed dead.

Minor Chernobyl leak 'poses no danger'

MOSCOW (R) — A reactor at the Soviet Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986, suffered a minor leak of radioactive cooling water last week but spillage was confined to a sealed area, a spokeswoman for the plant said Friday.

She said the leak occurred early last Saturday during maintenance at one of three reactors still

working at the plant.

"A valve broke and radioactive water escaped, but the water did not seep beyond a hermetically sealed area. None of the plant workers received any radioactive doses above the norm," she said by telephone from Chernobyl, in the Ukraine.

"It's not serious," a spokesman for the Moscow nuclear energy authority said. He said the incident ranked as a second-degree

danger on the international seven-degree safety scale.

A reactor at the Chernobyl plant ruptured five years ago throwing out radioactive waste that drifted over large parts of Europe. Soviet authorities said 31 people died in the immediate aftermath of the accident, including efforts to seal the reactor, but thousands more are suffering the effects of radiation poisoning.

Hungary needs strong church-Pope

BUDAPEST (R) — Pope John Paul arrived in Hungary Friday to spur the rebuilding of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church after four decades of Communist repression.

He knelt and kissed the tarmac at Budapest Airport at the start of the first pontifical visit to Hungary since Pope Leopold IX in 1052.

Cardinal Laszlo Paskai, the Hungarian primate, President Arpad Goncz and Prime Minister Jozsef Antall greeted the Pope who arrived after spending three days in his native Poland.

In a speech before flying by helicopter to the northern Danube City of Esztergom to pay homage to the late Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty, the Pope stressed that there was a need for a strong church in Hungary which shed

Communist rule last year.

"I have come... to offer to all the immense strength of religious faith," he said. "This religious orientation is what I propose as the indispensable and effective basis of the rebirth of your country."

The Pope warned also that transition to a free market economy and democracy in Hungary would not be by itself solve all the country's problems.

Social conflict and greed "can compromise your future and destroy your efforts to attain more just and humane social conditions," he added.

Hungary's 10 million population includes six million Catholics but only 10 per cent of them are churchgoers.

The church's traditional powerful role in Hungarian society has

been steadily eroded since World War II.

Church leaders were persecuted, religious orders suppressed and church schools secularised after the Communist seized power in 1943.

The influence of Hungarian bishops was damaged in later decades by accusations from many parish priests and Catholic believers that they cooperated too closely with the Communist regime in return for the lessening of restrictions on the church.

During his five-day visit, Pope John Paul will visit Debrecen in eastern Hungary, Pecs in the south and Szombathely in the west before a final public mass in Budapest's Heroes' Square. He is expected to be seen by up to 1.5 million people.

End of cold war means end for famous U.S. army corps

WASHINGTON (AP) — From D-Day at Normandy to G-Day in the Gulf, the army's VII Corps compiled a celebrated war record. On Thursday, it lost the battle of time.

The VII Corps is pulling up stakes in the sector of Germany it defended for more than 40 years, folding its flag and disappearing into the history books.

The army announced that as part of a plan to reduce by half the size of the U.S. force in Europe by 1995, the VII Corps will disband next year, leaving its sister unit, V Corps, as the central fighting outfit on the continent.

The VII Corps, commanded in the Gulf war by Lt.-Gen. Frederick Franks, fought the Iraqi Republican Guard forces in the ground offensive.

To be withdrawn with VII Corps by the end of September

1992 are two of four American combat divisions in Europe: the 3rd Armoured Division at Frankfurt, Germany, and the 8th Infantry Division (Mechanised) at Bad Kreuznach, Germany.

The two combat divisions that survived the cutbacks are the 3rd Infantry Division and the 1st Armoured Division. Other combat units, including one of the army's two armoured cavalry regiments, also will be withdrawn but no decisions have been announced.

The VII Corps, with more than 71,000 soldiers, 2,200 combat vehicles and 300 helicopters, has defended a 30,000 square mile (78,000 square kilometre) section of Germany along the former iron curtain since the end of World War II. Now that the cold war is over, the Bush administration sees less need for a large military presence in Europe.

"We need a force that makes sense for the evolving threat" rather than one tailored almost exclusively to handle a Soviet-led invasion of Western Europe, said Col. William Foster, chief of the army's war plans division at the Pentagon.

Foster said in an interview that whereas the U.S. military previously planned mainly for global war, it now is structuring its armed forces to respond to as many two major "regional contingencies," such as the Gulf crisis, simultaneously.

The story of VII Corps began in 1918 when it was assembled in France to train doughboys for combat in World War I.

On D-Day, June, 1944, the VII Corps led the bloody allied assault on German positions along Normandy's beaches. Under the command of Gen. J. Lawton "Lightning Joe" Collins,

the VII Corps rolled east through France and later fought in the decisive stages of the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes.

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COLUMN

Greece to abolish laws on duelling

ATHENS (AP) — A slight against one's honour, a thrown glove and a dawn encounter at ten paces where one of the duellists is killed, will no longer be considered a misdemeanor but murder. The weekly paper To Vima reported that five articles of the penal code concerning duelling that have been gathering dust in law books for over a century, will be abolished. Legal experts said Wednesday they did not know if anyone had ever been convicted under the penal code but that killing a person in a duel after the articles are written off will be considered premeditated murder. Webster's dictionary defines a duel as a formal fight between two people armed with deadly weapons, arranged and witnessed by two other people called seconds. There is one second for each duellist. The decision to abolish the articles was taken earlier this year and will be enacted this fall, the paper said. According to the penal code, anyone who engages in a duel and kills his opponent shall be punished with at least three years imprisonment. Simply engaging in a duel is also punished with at least six months in jail. But a duellist who violates the rules of chivalry — and shoots his opponent in the back for example — is punished according to the code on murder. Murder is a felony carrying a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

750,000 fill Central Park for Paul Simon concert

NEW YORK (R) — Three-quarters of a million people cheered and rocked with pop star Paul Simon at a free concert in New York's Central Park. Framed against a backdrop of New York's glittering skyline, Simon and his 17-piece band performed on a massive stage in front of a sea of swaying bodies dotted with flags and balloons and an occasional peace sign. Police estimated the crowd at 750,000 and there were no reports of trouble. There were just two arrests, one for drug possession and another for assault. A New York native, Simon said he wanted to give something back to the city where he made his start, first with partner Art Garfunkle as the duo Simon and Garfunkle and later as a solo performer. The crowd was ecstatic at every song during the two-hour, 15-minute concert. The loudest applause seemed to be for the older songs that Simon originally sang with Garfunkle, such as Bridge Over Troubled Waters, The Boxer and Sounds of Silence. Most of the old songs were more or less true to the way they were first performed but Simon has added African and Latin influences. The concert was part of his "born at the right time tour" which began in January. Simon introduced several members of his band, which has performers from several countries, including Cameroon, South Africa, Botswana and Brazil.

Gill, Jackson top finalists in country awards

NASHVILLE (AP) — Singers Vince Gill and Alan Jackson each garnered six nominations Thursday for Country Music Association Awards, including male vocalist of the year. Singer Garth Brooks, who got five nominations, was included in the entertainer of the year category along with Gill, Clint Black, George Strait, who has won it twice in a row, and Reba McEntire, who won in 1986. Finalists for top male vocalist were Gill, Jackson, Black, Brooks and Strait. Competing for No. 1 female vocalist will be McEntire, Patty Loveless, Kathy Mattea, Lorrie Morgan and Tanya Tucker. Nominated for single record of the year were Don't Rock The Jukebox by Jackson, Don't Tell Me What To Do by Pam Tillis, Friends In Low Places by Brooks, Here's A Quarter (Call Someone Who Cares) by Travis Tritt and Pocket Full of Gold by Gill. For album of the year, finalists were Don't Rock The Jukebox, No Fences by Brooks, Pocket Full of Gold by Gill, Put Yourself In My Shoes by Black and Ramour Has It by McEntire. The Judds, a mother-daughter duo, were named finalists for their fourth-straight award as vocal duo of the year. Other nominees were Baillie And The Boys, the Bellamy Brothers, Foster and Lloyd and Sweethearts of the Rodeo. Finalists for vocal group of the year were Alabama, Diamond Rio, the Kentucky Headhunters, Restless Heart and Shenandoah.